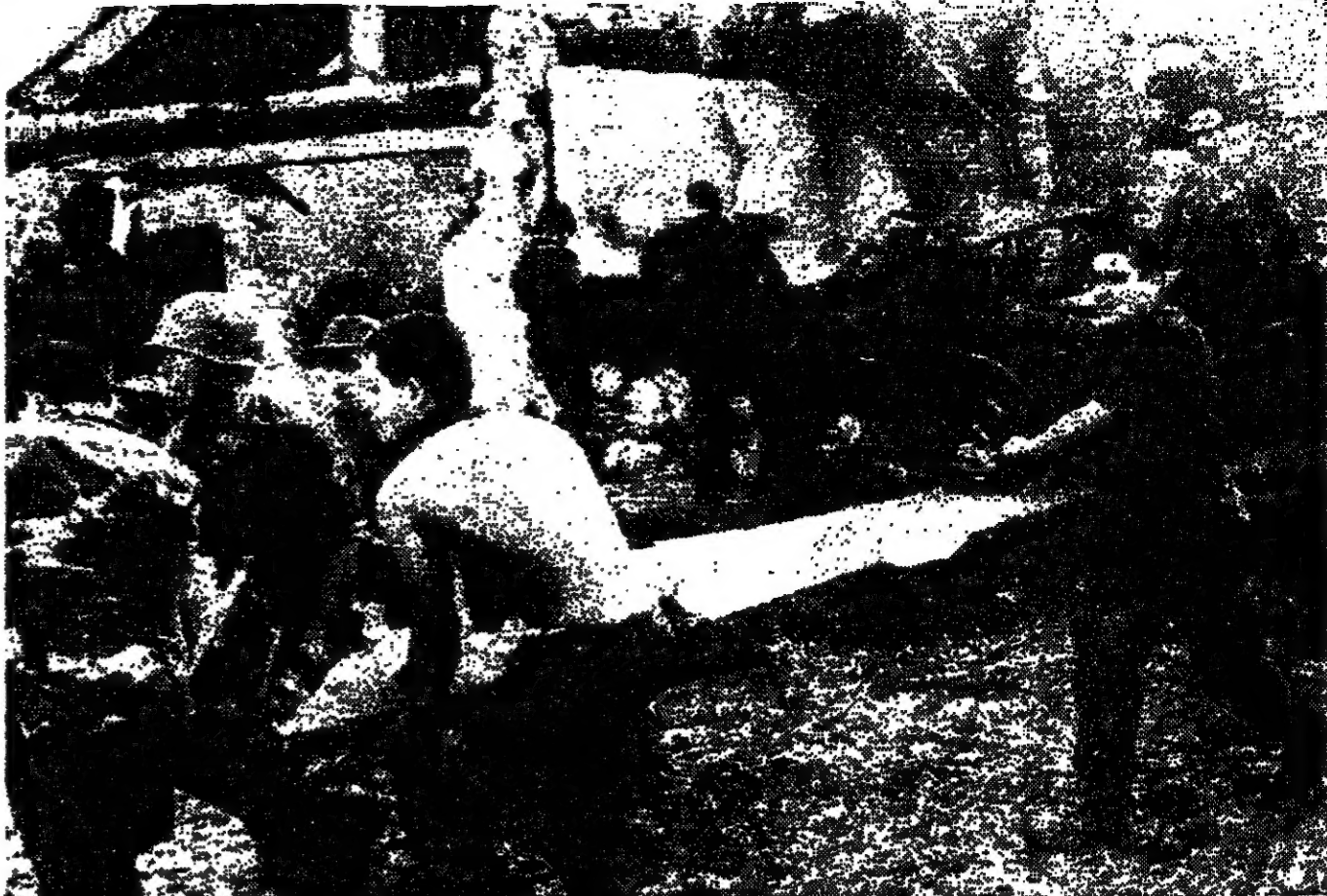


Two American jets shot down in retaliatory dawn attacks over Lebanon

Reagan threatens to stage more anti-Syria raids



Lebanese soldiers with wreckage from the American Corsair jet which crashed into a residential area, injuring six people.

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

The Reagan Administration said it would carry out more retaliatory raids like yesterday's air strikes against Syrian positions in Lebanon if there are further attacks on American reconnaissance aircraft or against Marines in the multinational peace-keeping force in Beirut.

ern Chouf region of Lebanon on Saturday. At least ten missiles were fired at them.

The Syrian authorities clearly knew they were firing on US reconnaissance aircraft and the volume of fire makes it clear that it was not locally directed or random.

However, US officials said the raid, days after the US and Israel reached an agreement on strategic cooperation, was not part of a US Israeli plan to force Syria to remove its forces from Lebanon.

A spokesman for Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, in Athens for the European summit, said the multi-national force was in close contact and Britain had been informed by the US of its intention to respond to attacks by sending in aircraft (Ian Murray writes).

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President Reagan yesterday said the raid was in response to an "unprovoked attack" and the US would continue to act in self-defence.

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SAS kills two in Ulster gun battle

From Richard Ford Belfast

Two men, believed to be members of the Provisional IRA, were shot dead yesterday in a gun battle when at least 50 shots were fired during a secret SAS operation in Northern Ireland.

A third man, injured in the shooting in lonely countryside at Clogh Road, near Coalishland, co Tyrone escaped in a car later found abandoned near the shores of Lough Neagh. The dead men were named as Colin McGirr and Brian Campbell.

Bloodstains were found in the car which the Army had fired upon and last night a major search was mounted for the man. Two loaded weapons, an assault rifle and a shotgun, found at the scene, were being examined by detectives.

According to police, the gunmen were challenged by soldiers, but when they failed to respond the Army opened fire. No soldiers were injured.

Later Mr Owen Carron, provisional Sinn Féin Assembly member for Fermanagh and South Tyrone, criticized soldiers for not allowing a priest to give the last rites to the dying men. But two Roman Catholic priests living near the scene said they had not been called to attend any shooting incident.

Last month after the killings of three church elders at Darkley, co Armagh, Mr James Prior, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, said the SAS was operating in the province, but refused to say where.

Five members of the Ulster Defence Regiment were among up to 12 people being questioned by detectives yesterday investigating sectarian murders and shootings in co Armagh. They were held during raids which began four days ago in the so-called "murder triangle" of the county.

McGlinchey hunt Page 2

Thatcher loses first round but battles on at summit

From Ian Murray, Athens

Mrs Thatcher lost the first round in the battle for EEC reform when the European summit got under way yesterday afternoon. She failed to persuade Mr Andreas Papandreu, the Greek Prime Minister, chairing the meeting, to discuss at the start the main problem she has come to Athens to resolve - the British budget contribution.

Yesterday's four-hour session was supposed to be spent in a first run through the paper, with the aim of sending officials and experts away to work out details on a text for a second discussion some time later today.

dependent on solving the financial questions. It would be inevitable that they would form the centre of the argument during the meeting.

Instead, Mr Papandreu insisted on working through the 26 page paper drawn up as a discussion document for the summit. In it, the budget is not mentioned until page 23, and then only in a form which Mrs Thatcher has given advance warning is "a very long way indeed from providing the basis of an agreement".

At the outset, Mrs Thatcher made a plea for the leaders to tackle "the most difficult and least prepared" section first. "We have to make it clear that decisions on one thing depend on agreement on others she said.

Nevertheless, Mr Papandreu felt that most countries wanted to tackle the problems in the order laid out in his paper. That was agricultural policy reform; the Community's structural funds; new policies; the budget; and enlargement. This put the financial problems well towards the end of the agenda.

She squashed any idea that Britain would accept the latest Commission proposals which seek to change the way in which budget benefits are calculated.

He said that everyone was aware Mrs Thatcher was impatient to talk about his problem and would have preferred to have dealt with it during the afternoon. "I think there would be a desire to move rapidly to it when we meet again," he said. "People want to get on with it and reach it before she gets very impatient."

Mrs Thatcher's irritation also impressed President Mitterrand of France. According to his spokesman there had been "striking rigidity" on the part of Britain. Its representatives had distinguished themselves by their inflexibility, he said.

Despite losing the argument over the agenda, Mrs Thatcher remained "very determined to get a settlement," according to her spokesman. He said she had told the meeting that "we are not going to make a fudged compromise decision. She was out to get something that was durable."

Mrs Thatcher had told the summit that viewed against the wider perspective of East-West relations and the world economy, the issues which divided the member states were "relatively small".

Geoffrey Smith column and Athens agenda, page 6

CND plans cruise road blocks

By John Witherow

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament agreed yesterday to blockade roads to prevent cruise missiles being deployed from Greenham Common air base in the event of heightened international tension.

The decision, taken at the annual conference in Sheffield, is part of a stepped-up campaign against the missiles. If cruise launchers get past women demonstrators at Greenham Common CND says it will try to block roads wherever necessary throughout Britain to prevent them reaching their launching sites.

CND is holding a "Refuse Cruise Day" next Monday and is encouraging industrial action against work connected with nuclear weapons, despite warnings that the organization's funds could be sequestered if it became involved in secondary action. In addition CND is to intensify action against Trident missiles. At the same time it will campaign to present the CND case for Britain leaving Nato, as part of a policy for the dissolution of both Nato and the Warsaw Pact.

A harder motion calling for Britain's withdrawal from Nato as a vital element of its demand for unilateral nuclear disarmament was referred back to the CND council.

The conference also stepped back from setting up groups in the armed forces. One delegate said that servicemen could be court-martialled.

Canon Paul Oestreicher, vice-president of CND, said the organization would challenge the Soviet Union to show the controversial American film *The Day After* to the Russian people. The film will be screened on British commercial television on Saturday.

Conference report, page 2

Leading article, page 13

MPs split over House Buyers Bill

By Julian Haviland, Political Editor

After several weeks of argument, Cabinet ministers remain in total disarray over how to handle the House Buyers Bill, promoted by Mr Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Great Grimsby, which will be published today.

The aim of the Bill is to simplify, speed up and cut the cost of the sale and purchase of houses, and its most contentious provision would allow persons other than solicitors to do conveyancing, provided they were licensed and insured to protect their clients.

Mr Mitchell, who has all-party support, is enthusiastically backed by the Consumers' Association and vigorously opposed by the solicitors' organization, the Law Society, some of whose members derive as much as 60 per cent of their income from conveyancing.

His chief opponent in Cabinet is Lord Hailsham, the Lord Chancellor, who has argued forcefully that the Bill's proposals have not been thought through.

The Ministry of Defence and civilian police are investigating the theft of up to £6m worth of diesel fuel from the Royal Navy's Faslane submarine base on the Firth of Clyde.

It is believed the investigation began over a month ago. So far six civilian ministry personnel have been suspended pending the outcome of the investigation, and six other civilians are helping with enquiries.

A ministry spokesman said yesterday: "This investigation has been going on for some time, and fuel of a substantial value is involved. However, a report has been sent to the Procurator Fiscal and we can make no further comment at this stage."

According to unofficial sources, the thefts took place over a considerable period of time. Both the Defence Ministry and the Scottish Crime

Squad are seeking to establish how such a quantity of fuel could be removed from the base without detection.

Yesterday, the Scottish Crime Squad refused to make a statement. But it has been claimed the fuel was sold off in England in a series of black market deals.

However, the ministry says no Royal Navy personnel or operations have been involved or affected by the incident.



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THE TIMES Tomorrow

Black... Suzy Menkes previews a New York exhibition of the essential Yves Saint Laurent

Brown... Peta Levi on the future of Capability's stately parks

Small... Paul Newman kicks off with a series on this year's potential FA Cup giant-killers with a look at Altrincham

Stylish... Robin Young goes to the Young Blood design exhibition at the Barbican

And simple... Roger Scruton questions the over-ready acceptance of left and right as political labels

Espresso... Computer horizons looks at the problems besetting Nato's new common language and offers a critical view of Britain's attitude to information handling

Martial law ends in Turkey

Martial law ended in Turkey yesterday with the opening of the new civilian parliament. Mr Necmeddin Karaduman of the majority Motherland Party was elected Speaker. Mr Bulend Uluhan, the outgoing Prime Minister favoured for the post by the military, was not proposed.

Record pay-out

The largest British insurance pay-out after a robbery will be completed shortly on the £26m gold bullion raid in west London 10 days ago Page 3

Gallery action

London Land Investment & Property said it might intensify its legal battle over the estimated £2m cost of its unsuccessful entry in the National Gallery architecture competition Page 2

Homeless fears

Government plans to close the Camberwell Reception Centre, south London, for single, homeless men could be a disaster, according to a psychologist Page 4

N Sea talks

Mr Peter Walker, the Secretary of State for Energy, will meet the United Arab Emirates' petroleum minister, Dr Mana Said Otaiba, to discuss Middle East concern over North Sea output Page 15

Managua offer

The decision of Nicaragua's Sandinista regime to hold elections in 1985 and offer an amnesty to US-backed insurgents poses a dilemma for the Reagan Administration Page 6

Kremlin split

Differing statements in recent Soviet official publications indicate that the Kremlin leaders are divided on whether or not to return to the Geneva arms talks Page 6

Polish arrests

Several people were arrested when Polish workers scuffled with militiamen while attempting to place a plaque at the Wujek colliery in memory of miners killed by riot police two years ago Page 7

Lloyd wins

Britain's John Lloyd caused the biggest surprise so far in the Australian Open tennis championships when he defeated the fourteenth seed, Steve Denton, yesterday Page 18

Leader page, 13

Letters: On the press from Sir Richard Storey and Mr J. D. Mayors; funds for research from Professor Sir Hermann Bondi; prison resources from Mr R. E. Adams and Mr H. Booth

Leading articles: CND; Council on Tribunals

Features, pages 10-12

Not just private medicine - a privatised NHS; the EEC's foreign policy achievement; a space shot from the Commons. Spectrum: pop go the millions

Monday Page: Workmates round the clock

Obituary, page 14: Mr Arthur J. Willis, Mr Herman Weinberg

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'The launchers will be faced with blocks on every essential route'

CND plans to blockade roads against cruise deployment

The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament agreed yesterday to intensify its action against cruise missiles by mounting roadblocks on essential service roads throughout Britain to prevent the missiles being deployed from the Greenham Common base.

The blockades were proposed at the CND annual conference in Sheffield by Dr Lynne Jones, who lives at Greenham Common.

Dr Jones told the conference: "We want you to get ready to act now in your own area to be ready on a 24-hour basis."

"If Mr Heseltine dares to bring the launchers out, if they get through the women's blockade, they will be faced with the whole peace movement on the alert blocking every essential service route in the country."

From Pat Healy, Sheffield

Women protesters at Greenham Common are distributing leaflets calling for help in creating a functioning resistance network to stop the launchers. "The overall effect of so many unpredictable blockades organized locally will show the Government of international tension."

The blockade will mean a massive increase in civil disobedience for which planning begins immediately.

"Refuse Cruise Day" on December 12 will be a national day of protest with strikes, or other industrial action, and a proposal to turn streets, schools, colleges etc into nuclear-free zones.

CND's commitment to intensified action over cruise will be matched next year with a broader campaign to stop the

Trident missile programme, to present the CND case for Britain leaving Nato as part of a policy for the mutual dissolution of Nato and the Warsaw Pact and to explain CND's opposition to "all nuclear alliances, nuclear power and the bloc mentality."

Against the wishes of the CND council, the conference decisively rejected campaigning for a nuclear freeze and adopted instead a wider campaign on the cancellation of Trident.

The conference rejected a suggestion originated by the veteran peace campaigner, Miss Pat Arrowsmith, that CND should form groups within the Armed Services. It agreed to an amended motion to "present an alternative non nuclear defence policy to interested members of the armed forces."

Mr Bruce Kent, the general secretary, said overt membership of CND could lead to servicemen being dismissed.

"I don't want low morale in the armed forces," he said. "I want such a high morale that they know what their obligations under the law are. I want them to know that they are violating the British Military Manual if they work with nuclear weapons, because they are illegal under international law."

CND could find itself in conflict with employment legislation after the conference voted overwhelmingly to work closer with the trades unions. Its motion called for "effective industrial action against work connected with nuclear weapons."

Two former Labour MPs, Mr Bob Cryer and Miss Joan Lester, were elected to the CND council, together with Helen John, one of the original Greenham women.

Leading article, page 13



Protest planners: Mr Mick Elliot, CND treasurer (left), with the general secretary, Mr Bruce Kent, at the Sheffield conference.

Benn claim of bomb link

Mr Wedgwood Benn, the former Labour Secretary of State for Energy will tell the Sizewell-B Inquiry this week that plutonium from the Sellafield (formerly Windscale) nuclear reprocessing plant has been sold to the Americans to make nuclear arms.

Mr Benn said that evidence of a connection between nuclear power and nuclear arms had been withheld from him when he was Secretary of State for Energy. He was addressing the first Tribune rally to be held during an annual conference of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Sheffield at the weekend.

He said: "It has now become totally clear from information provided to me that Windscale has been a bomb factory for the United States for a number of years. Our plutonium has been going to America for use in their nuclear weapons. You cannot separate nuclear weapons from nuclear power."

Mr Benn said the evidence had changed his view from supporting nuclear power to opposing it. He urged CND members to oppose nuclear power and to ignore arguments to tone down their commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament.

The movement was trying to change foreign policy in Britain and to ensure the survival of the human race. He saw no scope for toning down its message.

Earlier this year, the Department of Energy told the Sizewell inquiry that plutonium from British nuclear power stations had been exported to the United States in return for highly enriched uranium for the British defence programme. But Mr Robert Friddle, an under-secretary at the department, refused to tell the inquiry whether the plutonium was suitable for use in nuclear weapons.

The movement was trying to

Letters, page 13

Miners in clash on safety

By Barrie Clement, Labour Reporter

The National Union of Mineworkers has clashed with nine other unions over its denunciation of safety measures said 'employees' rights in the nuclear industry.

An attack on the industry in the union's submission to the Sizewell B inquiry was described as nonsense by Mr John Lyons, secretary of the Employees' National Committee of the Electricity Supply Industry.

Mr Arthur Scargill, president of the miners union, is due to appear at the hearings this week.

Mr Lyons has written to Sir Frank Layfield, inspector at the inquiry, on behalf of the nine unions disputing the pit union's contentions.

The offending paragraph in the miners' statement says: "By direct contrast (i.e. with the practices in the National Coal Board) nuclear workers are required to undertake highly dangerous work for which they are so regimented that democratic consultation with those workers in the front-line of the health and safety hazard is out of the question."

"The low level of resistance to this regimentation and control endangers not only the workers themselves but the entire population."

The miners' union said that the discipline which flowed from the controls prevented industrial action to enhance safety measures. The nine unions in the nuclear industry see this as an attack on their ability to protect members made by a union with vested interests in criticizing nuclear power.

Although a preceding paragraph in the miners' submission refers to uranium mines abroad, Mr Lyons believes the contention refers to the British nuclear industry.



Bond's 'flying flea' to join the Navy

James Bond-style autogyros (above) are going into service with the Royal Navy. The "flying fleas" which helped to smash Spectre in *You Only Live Twice* are to be carried on the back of new patrol boats.

Autogyros can be used to scout behind islands or over the horizon.

The machines, which were invented in Spain in the 1930s, operate like helicopters, except the main rotor is unpowered and provides lift as the tail rotor drives the autogyro forward.

The autogyro being offered by the shipbuilders Vosper Thornycroft, of Fareham, Hampshire, in a Seaspy system is designed by Wing Commander Ken Wallis.

Although the first Seaspy systems will be primarily for reconnaissance, Vosper hopes to fit them with systems to fool missiles.

Scargill rejects truce offer in pit pay dispute

By Our Labour Reporter

Mr Arthur Scargill rejected yesterday a suggestion by Mr Ian Macgregor, National Coal Board chairman, that there should be a Christmas truce in the miners' overtime ban.

Mr Scargill, president of the National Union of Mineworkers, said Mr Macgregor should agree on a substantial increase on the coal board's 5.2 per cent wages offer and guarantee that no pits would close unless exhausted "if he really wants to play Santa Claus."

Mr Scargill said: "If Mr Macgregor wishes to reopen negotiations on wages and the situation in our industry all he has to do is pick up the telephone and I will meet him any time, anywhere."

On Saturday Mr Macgregor said the miners were the only people who were being hurt by

the four-week old industrial action. They had lost about £13m in overtime payments with the average loss for craftsmen about £47 a week, face workers £27 and surface workers £35.

Coal stocks, however, now stand at 24.54 million tonnes, compared with 24.51 million tonnes when the overtime ban began.

Coal board statisticians believe there is an increasing grassroots revolt over the action as Christmas nears. The "truce" suggestion was apparently aimed at encouraging it.

Mr Macgregor suggested that the miners should accept the offer this week because back pay from the time the deal was put to the union would provide lump sums before Christmas, £50 in the case of face workers.

Gallery contest loser considers next legal move

By Hugh Clayton, Environment Correspondent

One of the main losers in the National Gallery architecture competition said yesterday it might step up the legal battle over the estimated £2m, cost of its unsuccessful entry.

London Land Investment & Property said its next legal move would depend on the appearance of the final design in the contest, which will go on show for the first time on Wednesday.

Plans will appear at a press conference and will be available for photographs. But it was not clear yesterday whether they would be put on public exhibition before being submitted to a public inquiry next year.

Mr Martyn Grogan, a director of London Land, yesterday denied a report that the company had unsuccessfully issued writs against ministers to recover the cost of entering the competition.

"We have never issued a writ," he said. "We have not abandoned anything. We are waiting to see what happens on Wednesday. If the design represents too closely what we were proposing then that is clearly another area for us to look at."

The competition was arranged last year with strong government support to find a partnership of developers and architects to build without cost to the public, an extension to the crowded gallery at Trafalgar Square.

The top half was to house part of the gallery's collection

and the bottom half offices from which the winning developer could recover the cost of building the new structure.

The contest ended in confusion, amid accusations that the rules had been changed before final judging. All designs submitted were rejected and one of the contestants was told to produce a new one.

Gallery staff preferred the scheme designed by the American architectural practice of Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, which would have been built by London Land.

A compromise was eventually agreed in which the commission went to Ahrends, Burton and Koralek, a London firm of architects who were supported by the Trafalgar House Group as prospective developers.

Staff of Ahrends and the gallery have spent much of this year touring modern galleries abroad and working jointly on a final scheme for Trafalgar Square. Gallery staff decided last year that the original curved scheme proposed by Ahrends was unsuitable for housing the National Gallery's collection.

Lord Asquith, chairman of the trustees of the gallery, refused yesterday to say how the final Ahrends design differed from its predecessors.

He also rejected any suggestion that some trustees were unhappy with the gallery's dependence on outside finance to provide it with extra space.

Big Irish police hunt for McGlinchey

From Richard Ford, Belfast

The Irish Republic's police were involved in one of their biggest security operations throughout the weekend as they hunted for Dominic McGlinchey and the kidnaped stores executive, Mr Don Tidey.

Police reinforcements were sent to Cork and all off-duty officers in the country were called in to join the hunt for Mr McGlinchey, who fled after being surprised by police at a bungalow in Carrigrohilly, near Cork, on Friday.

He escaped with a woman believed to be his wife, Mary, and another man after stripping the two unarmed officers of their uniforms and tying them up in the house only a few hundred yards from the village police station.

Road blocks were set up throughout the county but Mr McGlinchey, leader of the Irish

National Liberation Army, had a four-hour start, he could have travelled many miles before the alarm was raised.

The village has been the centre of two robberies, both believed to be the work of INLA. Last October an armed gang stole £60,000 in a post office raid and six months earlier £100,000 from a Securicor van only a few miles away.

On Saturday Jack Harnett, aged 77, and his wife Maureen were remanded in custody until Thursday after being charged in connection with the incident involving Mr McGlinchey, who is wanted on both sides of the border.

They were accused of falsely imprisoning two police officers, who discovered Mr McGlinchey at the bungalow as they carried out inquiries into the abduction of Mr Tidey.

H-block officers unable to check gun smuggling

Prison authorities in Northern Ireland have reviewed security policies at the Maze prison near Belfast on the basis that guns and explosives will always probably be within the complex.

Measures have been taken to improve security at the jail after the breakout by 38 Provisional IRA prisoners more than two months ago and before the report of an inquiry into that escape by Sir James Hennessey, Chief Inspector of Prisons in Great Britain.

The review of policy is an admission that the authorities now accept that it is impossible to stop weapons and explosives being smuggled into the prison however stringent the security checks.

Before the escape policy was generally based on the belief that it was unlikely that such items could reach any of the 800 convicted terrorists held in the H-blocks.

The report into the escape is being written by Sir James. Although it is not expected that either Mr James Prior, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, or his prisons minister Mr Nicholas Scott, will be forced to resign, there is less certainty about the governor, Mr Ernest Whittington, or individual officers on duty at points where security lapses occurred on the day of the breakout.

Mr Whittington took over as governor after the hunger strike having spent his career with the province's prison service. He is due to retire at the age of 60 next autumn.

The authorities are now concentrating on tightening a series of security barriers within the Maze in an attempt to prevent the lapses that occurred at the end of September. The 19 men are still on the run, despite an intensive police hunt on both sides of the border, and both the police and Northern Ireland Office are surprised that there have been no further arrests after the capture of four men in the days immediately after the breakout.

The Northern Ireland Office has implemented a number of measures since the escape. These include providing additional staff, more searches, and reaction force to deal with any trouble. Improvements have been made to the main gate, including a more secure electronic locking system, and the control room in each H-block has been fitted with bullet proof

screens to prevent a repetition of the incident last September when a prisoner was able to shoot the officer in charge through an open grill.

As these improvements have been taking place, Sir James assisted by 10 members of his inspectorate, has carried out detailed inquiry into security at the prison. That involved requests to prisoners and prison staff to give their views as well as thorough questioning of civil servants and Mr Whittington.

It is thought that the 19 men on the run are lying low in the republic, while false documents are obtained to enable them to travel abroad. The Provisional IRA have made no further attempt to build on their propaganda coup by producing one of the prisoners in public, even though it was thought that they might have done so at last month's Provisional Sinn Féin conference.

However, a leading member of the Provisionals said: "We no longer need that kind of stunt." Four days after that conference, a letter from the men on the run appeared in *Republican News*, a mouthpiece for the Provisional IRA, in which 19 fugitives thanked everyone who contributed to the success of the breakout from H block 7.

At the Maze prison officers have been carrying out industrial action since the escape in support of demands for extra staffing and changes in the running of the prison. The industrial action has meant that the vocational and educational courses as well as workshop activities have been abandoned. However, the authorities have been able to continue with visits.

Record figure for illegitimacy

The annual report of Sir Henry Yellowlee, the Government's Chief Registrar of Births, shows 89,900 illegitimate births in England last year, the highest figure recorded. The overall birthrate has fallen, but the proportion of illegitimate births has more than doubled in two decades.

Overseas selling prices
Australia \$2.28; Belgium 8 fr 50; Canada \$2.28; Denmark 12.50; France 12.50; Germany 12.50; Greece 12.50; Hong Kong 12.50; India 12.50; Italy 12.50; Japan 12.50; Korea 12.50; Malaysia 12.50; Mexico 12.50; Netherlands 12.50; New Zealand 12.50; Norway 12.50; Portugal 12.50; Singapore 12.50; South Africa 12.50; Sweden 12.50; Switzerland 12.50; Taiwan 12.50; Thailand 12.50; United Kingdom 12.50; USA 12.50; West Germany 12.50; Yugoslavia 12.50.

Equal pay fight for Europe

By a Staff Reporter

The Equal Pay Act is failing, with the gap between average male and female earnings widening, a National Council for Civil Liberties report published today says.

Women are caught in a low-pay trap, with nearly 60 per cent of female manual workers in poor-paid jobs, it says. Virtual sexual apartheid exists in the job market and male skills are consistently better rewarded than female skills, it claims.

New regulations introducing the concept of equal value are to be debated in the Lords today. But Miss Jo Morris, the Council's women's rights officer, says in the report: "Although the Government has made some concessions, they do not go far enough."

"We will encourage women to take their equal value claims to the European Court of Justice if they do not get satisfaction in the British courts."

Her report also compares three female skills with three male skills and shows that in each case men are better paid and have better prospects and better conditions.

Peace talks to start at Acas NGA settlement hopes improve

By Barrie Clement, Labour Reporter

Hopes are high of a settlement in the Stockport Messenger dispute as talks start today between Mr Selim (Eddie) Shah, chairman of the newspaper group and the National Graphical Association (NGA).

Court action against the NGA was suspended on Friday for a week after the union pledged to lift illegal picketing at the company's plants in Bury and Warrington for seven days.

The talks will cover the issues of the closed shop and the reinstatement of six NGA strikers, which has been at the centre of the dispute and has led to the seizure of the union's £10m funds.

The NGA has consistently ignored High Court rulings ordering that secondary action at the two plants be stopped, and has been fined £150,000 for contempt of court. It is felt, however, that the union will be anxious to avoid further and possibly heavier fines. Both parties will be seeking a face-saving compromise.

The Institute of Directors has been advising Mr Shah. It is reported to be canvassing a compromise, whereby the six dismissed NGA men are taken back not as employees but as subcontractors. The union has also suggested to Mr Shah that he creates a new company

which would employ the men.

The negotiations will take place at the London offices of the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) in London, where officers have insisted that offers made by either side will be made in writing. That is unusual, but reflects the distrust manifest on both sides after weeks of fruitless negotiation and violent scenes outside the two plants.

In a poll published yesterday by *The Sunday Times* the public gives two to one backing to Mr Shah. The poll, conducted by MORI, asked respondents last Friday which side they most sympathized with: 51 per cent chose the company, against 25 per cent for the NGA. Of trade unionists, 44 per cent backed the NGA and 34 per cent the Messenger.

Part of Sir Woodrow Wyatt's column in yesterday's *News of the World* failed to appear because it contained comments about the NGA's part in the *Stockport Messenger* dispute which union members at the newspaper found unacceptable.

Radio Times strike

A special meeting of the national council of printing trade union Sogat '82 will meet

tomorrow to decide whether or not to comply with a High Court injunction stopping a strike which would halt production of the *Radio Times*.

Mr William Keys, general secretary of the union, is expected to advise the Executive to abide by the law or be prepared to face sequestration of funds, as happened in the case of the National Graphical Association.

Mr Robert Maxwell, chairman of the British Printing and Communications Corporation, said last night he was prepared to suspend any further court action until after the Sogat leaders have met.

The union has instructed its members at the company's plants in East Kilbride, Scotland, Bristol and Leeds to stop work on the *Radio Times* in sympathy with colleagues taking action over the closure of the corporation's works at Park Royal, North London.

At stake for the company is the bumper Christmas issue of the magazine. The union has so far refused to withdraw its strike instruction to its members at the three plants but there have been signs over the weekend that some might work normally today.

Letters, page 13

Stubborn Smyslov stays in front

By Harry Golombek, Chess Correspondent

The sixth game of the Ribli-Smyslov match on Friday was a hard-fought Queen's Gambit Declined, in which Smyslov employed a stubborn Slav defence, Schlechter variation.

Ribli made a slight divergence from established theory on move 12 and obtained some pressure on the Queen's side. But Smyslov defended well in an active manner.

On move 26, he sacrificed a pawn to gain active play for his pieces.

Ribli appeared to make an ill-considered move just when he was consolidating his advan-

age. Smyslov was able to regain his pawn, coming down to a dead-drawn ending after 38 moves.

Both players continued to try to get something out of the game, but a draw was agreed belatedly after 42 moves.

So, the former world champion still leads Ribli by a full point in the Acorn Computers world championship semi-finals being played at the Great Eastern Hotel, Liverpool Street.

The score is Smyslov 3½, Ribli 2½ - and the young Hungarian Grand Master must win a game if he wants to save the match.

Wales, where unemployment is above the national average.

A digest of statistics published today by the Welsh Office, show that there were 271 suicides last year, compared with 213 in 1981.

Divorces rose by nearly three per cent, from 9,070 petitions in 1981 to 9,326 last year.

Bankruptcies dealt with by Crown courts rose by nearly 10 per cent, from 306 in 1981 to

Insurance payments on £26m gold bullion raid almost completed

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Reporter

The largest settlement for a robbery in the history of British insurance will be completed within the next few days when the last cheques are paid out for the £26m gold bullion robbery 10 days ago.

A gang of between three and six made their way into Brinks-Mat's warehouse close to Heathrow airport on November 26 and stole three tons of gold bars, other gold and precious metals, diamonds and travellers' cheques. According to witnesses the haul disappeared south in an old van.

As the first insurance payment, of £17m, was made five days later, the insurance brokers denied the swift settlement reflected on the police inquiry. Indeed, with a £2m reward the prospects were "hopeful".

Privately the security industry and senior police officers are much more cautious. The £6.25m Security Express robbery last April is still unsolved but there have been arrests for a £6m jewellery robbery off Bond Street in June.

In the latest robbery there are reports that police are still not certain how the robbers got into warehouse number seven on the Heathrow International Trading Estate.

When three armed men, their faces covered by balaclavas, appeared in the warehouse, at least one guard was making tea in the staff restroom at the back of the warehouse. Others of the total of six staff told police they were around the building.

When Commander Frank Cater, head of the Flying Squad, was asked by *The Times* if the staff might have left their posts and been gathered for tea, he said he could not comment on lines of inquiry.

Nor could he say whether exterior alarms for the warehouse had been turned off after the staff arrived for work.

The warehouse often holds gold bullion, but the load 10 days ago appears to have been very large and destined to be moved within hours.

But did the robbers have luck or judgment? If they broke in simply to take the gold, why bother to waste time taking the other valuables which were worth a few hundred thousand pounds?

The answer is important. If the gold was the object of the robbery, then it is likely the gang already had a buyer for the 8,600 bars and the chances of the gold's recovery must now be slight. The other valuables could have been taken as a greedy whim.

But if the robbery was opportunistic, then it is likely the gold has been hidden somewhere until a buyer can be found. The risks for the gang are much higher and the hopes of the police much stronger.

The balance could be tipped by the reward and yet the £500,000 offered after the Security Express robbery proved ineffective. One very senior officer last week speculated that detectives could be dealing with a gang or gangs whose security was extremely good: criminals who have learnt the lessons of the past.

In the past week at least three psychics have approached Scotland Yard with offers of help and details have been recorded.



Vicar puts faith in the Devils

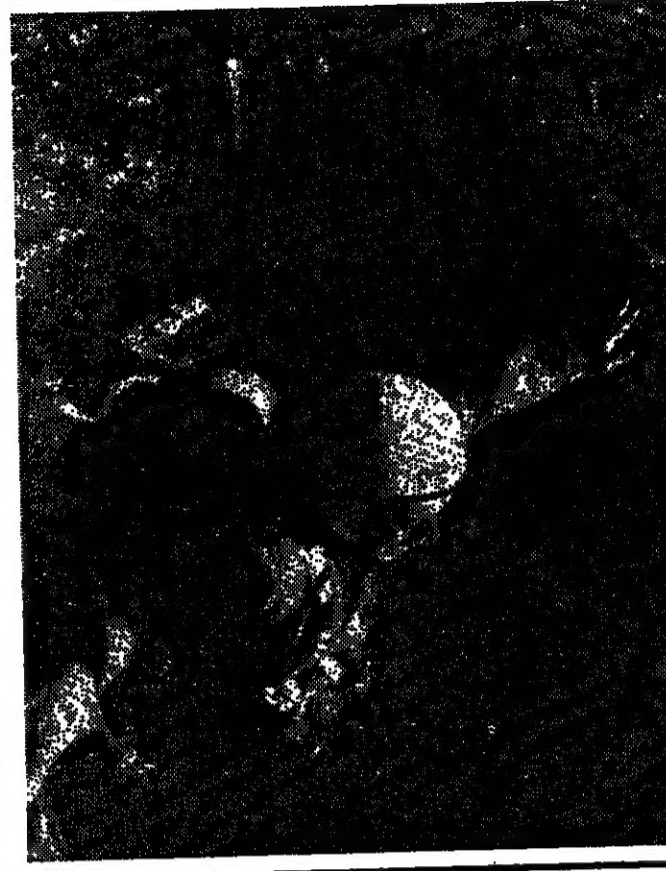
The Rev Peter Wadsworth, aged 31, jumped 2,000 feet with the Red Devils yesterday, in aid of his church's appeal fund.

The tower is crumbling at St Mary's, Farnham Royal, Berkshire, and its Norman chancel needs urgent repairs.

The vicar, above left seeking courage and then jumping, took the plunge at Aldershot, Hampshire, with five parishioners. Together they hope to raise at least £4,000 to add to £13,800 collected already.

He said: "We need about another £9,000 to save the tower, but I think today has helped enormously although it hasn't done an awful lot for my nerves."

"The Red Devils were very helpful and I would love to do it again. It was enormous fun and I am just thankful I did not end up in the trees. I could not say whether I had any help from above or not."



Sellafield's poor publicity hits local fish sales

From Ronald Faux, Ravensglass

The publicity given to the Sellafield nuclear plant in Cumbria has severely affected the local fishing. The picture of contaminated fish and sea water presented by a Yorkshire Television documentary and the activities of Greenpeace have forced Mr Paul Pedersen, a Ravensglass fisherman, to lay up his boat temporarily. He normally sells fish caught in the Irish Sea on the beach.

"I have had seven customers in the last 10 days," he said.

Mr Pedersen supplies a fish shop in Cleator Moor run by his son but sales have fallen 75 per cent since the latest scare.

In Whitehaven, Mr Richard Dunham, head of one of the largest wholesale and retail fish merchants in the county, said: "Sales have dropped by half in the last three weeks. One shop has put a sign in the window saying 'no local fish sold here'."

About 70 per cent of the fish Mr Dunham handles are caught within 30 miles of the Cumbrian coast, by local boats and vessels from Northern Ireland. He does not believe the discharges from Sellafield harm fish or make them dangerous to eat, but during the past three years he has complained regularly to the Government about discharges from other industrial complexes on the coast, which, he says, have done far more damage.

"They change the colour of the sea some days and between here and St Bees Head the sea bed is completely dead. Three years ago you could find big healthy lobsters there, now there is nothing."

Dr John Jago, who has been a general practitioner in the Seascale area for 17 years, lives at Drigg, near where nuclear waste from Sellafield is stored.

He said that while Seascale did record an abnormally high number of leukaemia deaths among children, the village at that time had probably four times the average number of children for a community of that size.

On Seascale resident summed up the problem thus: "Most people can grasp how gas and electricity works but nuclear power is full of bogymen they cannot comprehend. That makes them afraid or uncertain, particularly when some expert says it is unsafe."

Meantime, hoteliers gear for next year's trade.

Owen plea for inquiry

By Our Political Editor

Dr David Owen, has written to the Prime Minister to suggest that an independent committee of inquiry into the safety of the Sellafield nuclear plant formerly Windscale at Cumbria, is needed to restore public confidence.

Dr Owen leader of the Social Democratic Party, said yesterday that he did not believe in too many public inquiries, but he had least that four inquiries into different aspects of its operations were in progress.

They are being conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; the Department of Environment; The Nuclear Installations Inspectorate and Sir Douglas Black, former president of the Royal College of Physicians.

Sir Douglas was appointed last month to study allegations of an abnormally high incidence of leukaemia and other cancers among children living near Sellafield.

Dr Owen said that a small group should be assembled to act as a committee of inquiry and gather the evidence of the different investigators.

Concern on cable TV costs

Future subscribers to cable television networks are likely to pay more for the service than would otherwise have been the case because the Government's approach is not liberal enough, the Institute for Fiscal Studies claims.

In an article published in the December issue of *Fiscal Studies* highlighting the British cable television policy, the institute concludes: "The cable industry will be overcapitalized and is being asked to provide services that are potentially unremunerative, in order to cater for the Government's desire to have a national cable grid which can carry business data. This means higher subscription rates, little control on the market power of cable operators, if it in fact does exist, and, if the cost penalties of these requirements are too large, a reduction in the rate of cable expansion."

The Government's rigid criteria for selection of those to be awarded cable franchises have emphasized new technology and the provision of services, like teleshopping and telebanking, and local data services, which are meant to "piggy-back" on cable networks, which will be largely funded by entertainment channels. Only 11 of 37 applications have been awarded franchises and even those will be subject of the Home Office receiving certain assurances.

Five of the applications are in some sort of partnership with British Telecom.

Primary teachers untrained in science

By Lucy Hodges, Education Correspondent

Ninety per cent of primary school teachers have no science training and concentrate on teaching children to observe the world around them rather than to undertake their own experiments, a survey published by the Department of Education and Science says.

The survey of pupils aged 11 carried out by the department's Assessment of Performance Unit in about 800 schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, showed that not one of the maintained primary schools had a laboratory and few had a special area designated for science.

Most schools spent less than £1 per pupil a year on science equipment. The English schools spent an average of 66p, Welsh schools 58p and those in Northern Ireland 37p. Of the 63 per cent of survey schools in Northern Ireland which provided a figure, a quarter said they have spent no money on science resources.

Two schools, both in Northern Ireland, said it was their school's policy not to teach science. The rest taught science as a specific part of the curriculum, as it arose or as a planned part of other topics.

Science was a specified part of the curriculum in most of the middle and independent schools in England (about 80 per cent in each case), but in a much lower proportion of the primary schools (under half).

However, more than 80 per cent of the schools of every type expected science to occur at least in a planned way in topic work if not as separate science activities.

Teachers in the survey were asked to say what skills they emphasized in their teaching of science. They concentrated on those concerned with making, recording and using observations. All of the statements concerned with skills of experimentation were each selected by fewer than a quarter.

The survey concludes that teachers are more interested in developing those skills which do not involve pupils in knowing a great deal about science.

Science in Schools, (Department of Educational Science, Elizabeth House, York Road, London SE1 7PH).

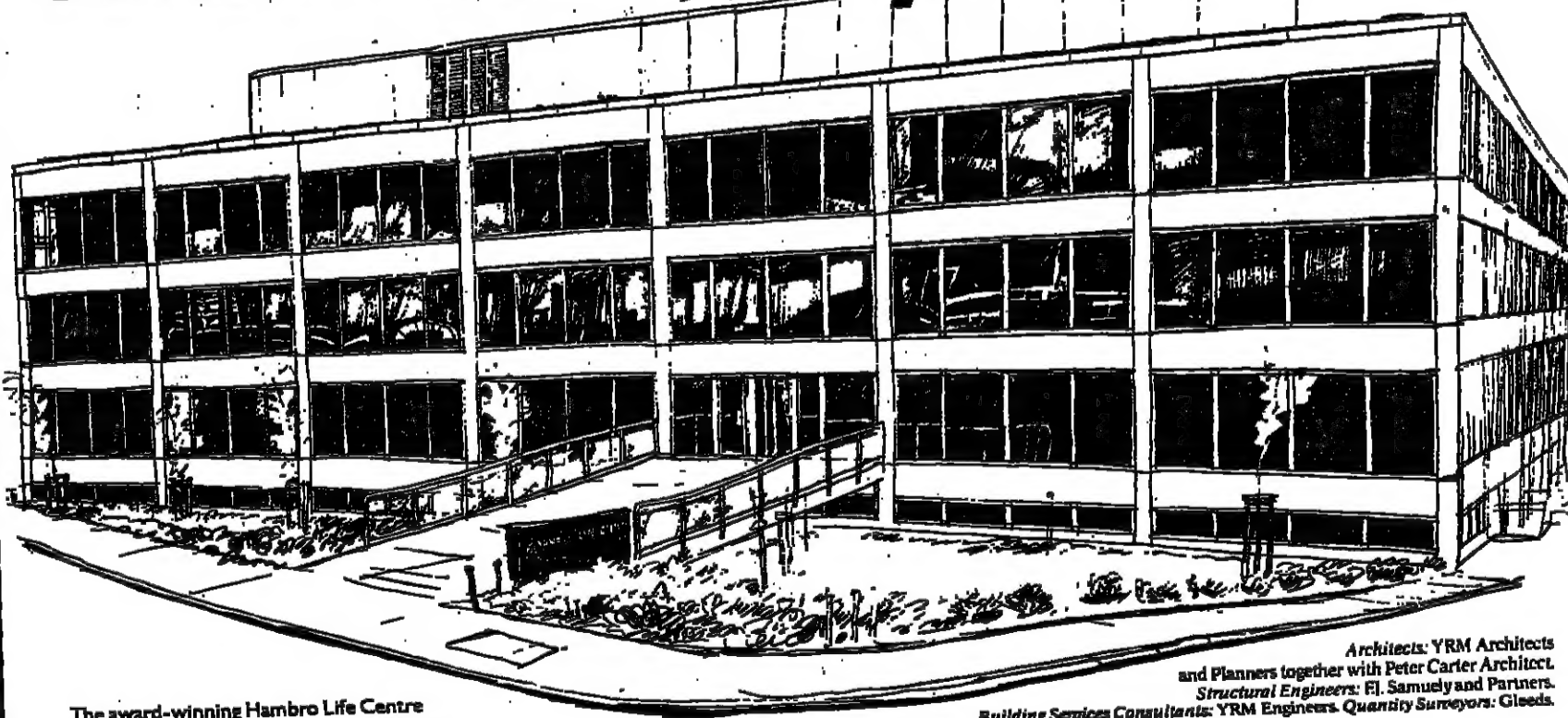
Cuts 'put pupils in danger'

The biggest comprehensive school in the country has called in the school inspectors (HMI) to inspect conditions which it says have deteriorated dangerously because of spending cuts.

The governors of Exmouth Community College, in Conservative-controlled Devon, have closed parts of the school which they consider unsafe. Netball and tennis courts are shut because broken wire netting has injured children.

Two swimming pools have been closed because of uneven paving, and dangerous gym equipment has been taken out of use.

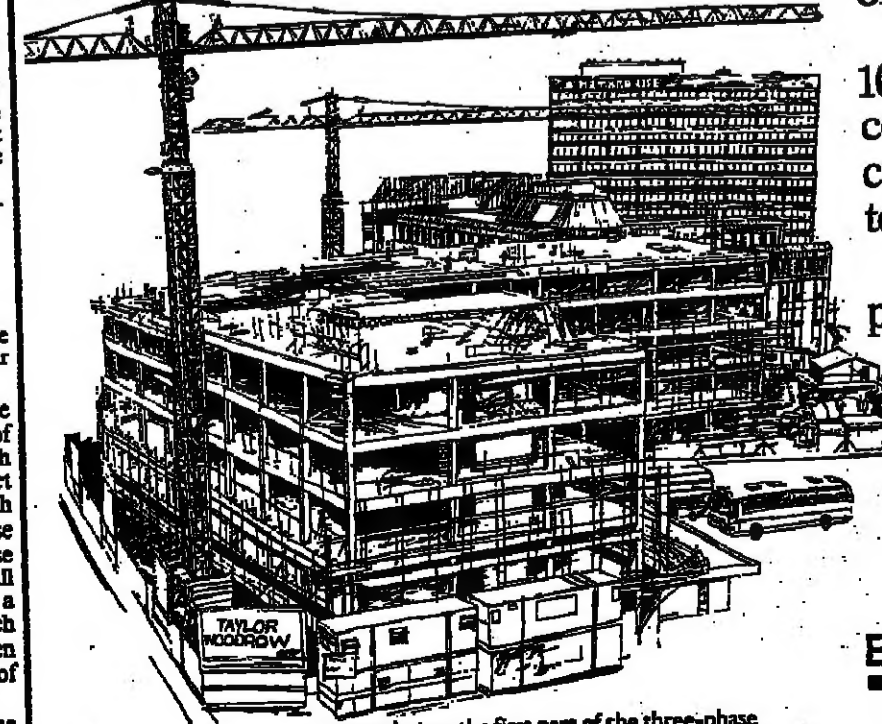
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Basically speaking, a computer whizzkid

By Our Education Correspondent

When Daniel Isaacman (right) was 13 he learnt to write his first computer program. When he was 16 he built his own Sinclair ZX81 microcomputer in an hour, wrote a program for it and sold it for £70.

Now, at the grand age of 18, he is the author of three books of computer games, the third of which is published by Sparrow Books and contains 18 games on which computer whizz-kids can sharpen their wits. The new book contains a section on the language of Basic, how to write your own program, and a glossary of instructions.

Designed for 10-year-olds upwards for use on some of the most widely used home computers, the BBC, Dragon, Electron, Vic and ZX81 and Spectrum, the game takes the computer fanatic into a variety of worlds.

Daniel Isaacman, now a first-year student of Manchester engineering at Manchester University, has had his interest in computers accidentally directed by his father, Mr Gerry Isaacman, editor of the *Hampstead and Highgate Express*. He bought his son his first Triton computer kit at the age



of 14 and introduced him to Osborne publishers, for whom he wrote his first books on space and battle games.

The new book took him four months to compile during the year off between school and university.

Computer Games, by Daniel Isaacman, (Sparrow Books, £1.50).

Watchdog calls for drug report

By Nicholas Timmins

The Committee on Safety of Medicines is to ask the drug manufacturer Ciba-Geigy for a copy of an internal report said to question the continued sale of two pain-killers which are alleged to have dangerous side-effects.

The committee is conducting a full review of phenylbutazone, sold by Ciba-Geigy as Butazolidin, an anti-inflammatory drug developed after the Second World War and used to treat rheumatism, arthritis and gout, the Department of Health said yesterday. It is also reviewing Transderm.

It had not yet received a report linked to *The Sunday Times* in which company doctors are said to have called a year ago for a reassessment of the drugs, now that less toxic alternatives are available. According to *The Sunday Times*, 512 deaths have been associated with the two drugs in Britain between 1964 and 1980.

Ciba-Geigy yesterday refused to answer questions on the report, but said "all relevant documentation" would be made available.

Speech therapy 'in broom cupboards'

By Pat Blair

Adults and children with speech handicaps are going untreated or are being referred too late to speech therapists who are themselves handicapped by poor accommodation and equipment, a survey published today discloses.

The report on conditions facing speech therapists in the National Health Service says that one in six has poor accommodation for clinics, one in nine has poor equipment and more than two out of five have unsatisfactory links with family doctors.

It gives instances including a speech therapist using her car as an office and some schools where "therapists were reluctantly 'fitted in' where and when possible, with corridors and broom cupboards not unusual".

One patient was reported to have been referred so late that

he died before his communication aids were provided. In another case, a teacher is quoted as not referring a child for speech therapy "because it was pointless to do so until he could talk".

The survey, in which 850 speech therapists responded, is published by Vocal, a newly registered charity which, with the help of a grant from the Department of Health and Social Security has brought together the College of Speech Therapists and more than 20 voluntary organizations. It aims to provide a single contact point for professionals and members of the public who need help with speech problems.

Vocal is pressing for speech therapy to reach all who need it. It says: "There is very real concern that some patients who never acquire or some who lose their power of speech and

language are not offered the opportunity to improve their quality of life.

The report says that the growth in the number of charities providing help with speech problems is the direct result of the lack of NHS speech therapy services. "Among those who are in contact with these organizations are people of all ages who, having suffered a stroke or some other speech impairment, have never been referred for speech therapy of any kind", it says.

In the past 11 years, the demand for speech therapy has expanded, notably in the fields of mental handicap and geriatrics, the report says.

Report of a Survey on the Current Conditions and Needs of Speech Therapists in the National Health Service, (Vocal, South Western Hospital, St Peter's Office, Leander Road, London, SW9).

Civil servants blunder on the big differences between district councils

By David Walker, Social Policy Correspondent

Civil servants overseeing abolition of the metropolitan counties are apparently ignorant of the 12-year-old distinction between metropolitan district councils in the shire counties.

The Home Office has sent a consultation paper to the Association of District Councils, which represents shire districts, in the belief that all "districts" are the same.

A letter to Mr Gordon McCartney, secretary of the ADC, invited his members' response to the recent White Paper on abolishing the Greater London Council and the six metropolitan counties - although the shire districts are unaffected.

District councils in the metropolitan areas are organized in the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. They have more powers than the shire districts.

The Home Office set out in the letter the complex arrangements that will be needed to run the probation service once the counties are abolished. It envisages one district council taking the lead in paying staff and running probation offices and charging the other districts in the area.

Jenkin lobbies Tory leaders

Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment, has taken the unusual step of privately lobbying Conservative councillors in the metropolitan districts about the Government's plans to abolish the metropolitan counties.

He has written a letter on Conservative Central Office notepaper to leaders of Conservative groups trying to still the doubts that have been raised over the creation of a large number of joint boards to run services previously the responsibility of the metropolitan counties.

Mr Jenkin denies that the Government is acting out of political spite - "even though some of these authorities have done more than any to bring local government into disrepute".

He says: "Almost every Conservative councillor and party worker I have met has encouraged us to get ahead as quickly as possible."

However, the only area where the Conservative districts have strongly supported abolition is the West Midlands.

Mr Jenkin has been publicising an estimate he received from Dudley council of the substantial staff savings to be gained from the change. Dudley says that it will need 200 staff for planning, highways and refuse disposal departments, instead of the 300 employed on the same Dudley functions by the West Midlands county.

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Final trim: An exhibit being prepared for judging at the Royal Smithfield Show today (Photograph: John Manning).

Farming industry in show condition

The Royal Smithfield Show, the annual London showpiece of British farming, opened yesterday in the shadow of the EEC summit meeting in Athens.

But at the moment the industry is enjoying its best period since the mid-1970s.

Mr Michael Bealing, president of the Agricultural Engineers' Association, said: "Although what they do in Athens may create a hiccup or two, we expect the recovery to continue."

Mr Christopher Evans, the association's chief economist, said this year's tractor registrations were 7 per cent up on last year and machinery sales had increased by 17 per cent in value, each sector now being worth about £400m.

About 2,600 combine harvesters had been bought this year, a record 20 per cent increase, but that was an exceptional figure and he would not expect the market to stay at that level.

Mr Robert Calder, managing director of International Harvester, said his company had made a profit last April for the first time in two and a half years and has since enjoyed several months in the black.

But Mr Jack Rutherford, the company's president, said the return to profitable trading had been achieved only at the cost of drastic pruning. Total worldwide sales of £3,700m were less than half those of 1979.

Visitors to the show had to run the gamut of a large and noisy group of vegetarians and animal welfare campaigners chanting "meat means murder".

Their message, as usual, went unheeded by those responsible for the exhibits, which this year, for the first time, include eight cattle from the Dartmoor Prison Farm.

Livestock entries are well up on last year and the numbers of live and carcass sheep are a record. The show continues at Earls Court until Thursday.

Plight of homeless single men

Centre closure 'could be a disaster'

By Nicholas Timmins, Social Services Correspondent

Plans by the Department of Health and Social Security to move single homeless men out of Camberwell Reception Centre, south London, and into community units, flats and hostels are falling and are proving a potential disaster, a psychologist who has spent 18 months working at the centre says.

The department intends to shut the former Victorian workhouse known as "The Spike" by the end of 1985.

The centre, acknowledged by the department and voluntary organizations to be little more than a "human warehouse", has been renamed a resettlement unit. The numbers there have fallen from about 700 in 1979 to 300 as a £10m programme to provide alternative accommodation has started.

But a report on the proposed closure says that without radical changes in the way the remaining residents are trained to handle the outside world, many will end up in prison or hospital, sleeping rough or dead.

Attempts to resettle the men, many of them alcoholics with physical and mental handicaps,

are rarely successful. Mr Corinne Harrison-Gledhill, a psychologist invited by the department to work with staff at the unit, says:

Staff are not properly trained to resettle the men, she says, and repeated failures have caused depression, drinking and aggression among the staff, who believe the daily exercise of resettlement is "a waste of time, effort and money".

Staff are demoralized and as the experienced ones leave to secure their own futures there is a danger that "Camberwell could become the site of a dangerous and certainly regrettable series of events".

She says: "There is a hard core of 'old unresettlables'. Those with a history of child molestation and bottom pinching, the incontinent, spitting, loud and abusive, dirty, methylated spirit drinking 'crazy men', who will not tolerate and will not be tolerated by fastidious landlords and authoritarian heads of charitable organizations".

"At Camberwell, there are men who have been discharged from mental hospitals because they are too violent. But because

there is a high level of tolerance, there is little actual violence, and, more importantly, the men will stay there".

But she added: "If the man does get as far as moving into a flat, he may do any of the following: sell the keys and rent book for drinking money and return to the unit; take in an abusive flat mate and leave to get away from the situation he has created; spend more time in hospital or jail than in the flat, or simply vanish, leaving the flat to vandals. Or he is found dead, having died alone some time before".

In the 18 months she worked at the unit, Mr Harrison-Gledhill said, three men who had been resettled were found dead, from alcoholic poisoning, hypothermia and an internal haemorrhage.

But proposals for further research to improve the chance of resettlement and to try to establish why the men end up in places like Camberwell, have been vetoed within the department, she says.

When the unit closes, "it is very likely that the incidence of death from exposure, alcohol poisoning and traffic accident

will increase, and that there will be a notable increase in the load taken by police, hospitals and social services".

Many of the men at Camberwell in their thirties and sixties, who have lived there for years, have the social age of children under 10, she says. Without proper assessment and treatment, they are no more likely to behave in a grown-up manner than actual children.

Mrs Harrison-Gledhill says she wrote the report to expose what is happening at the centre because the Official Secrets Act prohibits staff at the unit from commenting.

Civil servants responsible for the unit have acknowledged that the report is disturbing and an internal report by medical officers is believed to say that at times 90 per cent of those resettled have returned to Camberwell within three to six months.

However Lord Glenarthur, Under-Secretary of State for Social Services, told the House of Lords last week the report had been read with "considerable interest" and that work was "well advanced" towards closing the unit.

Juveniles in jail at record level

England is jailing more children than ever before, police and welfare workers were told at a conference in Birmingham yesterday.

The three-day conference was called by Northamptonshire County Council to discuss ways of preventing juveniles from being taken to court. Juvenile bureaux in Wellingborough and Corby which pioneered an alternative system of dealing with young offenders, have halved the number going to court, the conference was told by Professor Norman Tutt, lecturer in social studies at the University of Lancaster.

He quoted from the speech by Mr Leon Brittan, Home Secretary in which he said that in the past 20 years the number of adults going to jail had proportionately halved while the number of juveniles receiving custodial sentences had more than tripled.

The situation is said to have become worse since the Criminal Justice Acts which came into force earlier this year. That legislation allows magistrates to give more young people custodial sentences.

The Northamptonshire bureaux are made up of education, probation and social workers and the police. If possible the young offenders are made to make restitution or are given a caution rather than having to go to court. The idea is to induce a sense of shame and responsibility by introducing the offenders to their victims and families.

Mr Bert Cox, co-founder of the scheme, which will be extended to Northampton next year, said: "Many adolescents grow out of their problems but if they are warped by the system early on then they remain warped."

Police in Cambridgeshire are presenting a three-act play during the Christmas season to push home their message about the dangers of drinking and driving.

The 20-minute drama will be staged by a travelling troupe of officers at schools, colleges, clubs, factories, offices and military establishments in the county.

Boys die in car

John Manning, aged 16, and his friend, William Owen, aged 15, were found dead on Saturday night in a fume-filled car in a garage in Clough Road, Speke, Liverpool. The police said that the boys fell asleep with the engine running.

Twin sought

The parish council at Sutton Bridge, Lincolnshire, intends to try to twin with a village in Scotland, Wales or even England after failing to find a community in Europe willing to establish links with it.

Honours system

Gongs signal new round of class war

By Peter Hennessy

The honours system brings out the best and worst in the British people. Nobody cavils at a posthumous George Medal for a bomb disposal expert or a British Empire Medal for a bookkeeper or school dinner lady.

But there is one of its branches anything remotely connected with politics or its periphery in industry, the trade unions or Whitehall - which routinely brings out the class warrior in the more strident sections of society.

This week's eruption will come fairly inside the class warfare category. Tomorrow Mr Austin Mitchell, Labour MP for Great Grimsby, will use the 10-minute rule to put before the Commons a data compiled by the Labour Research Department. It places the names of captains of industry, honoured for services to business and commerce since Mrs Thatcher took office in 1979, alongside a list of companies which have con-



Sir Robert Armstrong: A passionate interest.

tributed to Conservative funds.

When Labour is in power, venom is directed at trade unions "barons", jowly-faced men who have done well out of the corporate state - knighted or ennobled on their way to quango appointments where they wield an allegedly pernicious influence.

But the bulk of the honours system is routine and uncontroversial. It is serviced by one of

the best-oiled bits of the Whitehall machine. At its apex is the Main Honours Committee (MHC), the final control mechanism (unless the award is for political services, in which case it goes to the Political Scrutiny Committee of privy councillors) before the Prime Minister makes final dispositions and the list is rushed to the *London Gazette* for publication as the New Year or Birthday Honours.

Presiding over the MHC is Sir Robert Armstrong, Secretary of the Cabinet, a great believer in honours who, despite his other formidable duties, takes a passionate interest in the work. Feeding the MHC are a battery of subcommittees - the two biggest deal with industry, commerce, agriculture and local services. About 4,000 names have to be whittled down to about 1,000 before the list reaches Mrs Thatcher.

The honours system has its amusing heroines. In the end it is kept running by Mrs Mary Hedley-Miller, a retired

Treasury official, who now serves as the Cabinet Office's Ceremonial Officer, and Miss Ruth Gardner, the font of all knowledge in the ceremonial section, who has been engaged on the task since the late 1940s.

The system has survived two world wars, eight Labour governments and Lord Wilson of Rievaulx's notorious resignation list of 1976. All it has lacked is the monument for which it has cried out for years in the shape of an Ealing comedy.

The plot, a down-system version of *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, writes itself. An eccentric lepidopterist, played by the late Alastair Sim, a candidate for the BEM who just happens to have the same surname as a well-known (fictional) prime minister, a candidate for a peerage, has his file forwarded by mistake to the Political Honours Scrutiny Committee. Fill in the rest according to taste.

Cambridge University awards

The following elections

THE DIFFERENCE A REGULAR MONTHLY INCOME MAKES:

What 11½% p.a. gross earns you every month

Investment	Average monthly income	Investment	Average monthly income
£ 2,000	£ 19.17	£15,000	£143.75
£ 3,000	£ 28.75	£16,000	£153.33
£ 4,000	£ 38.33	£17,000	£162.92
£ 5,000	£ 47.92	£18,000	£172.50
£ 6,000	£ 57.50	£19,000	£182.08
£ 7,000	£ 67.08	£20,000	£191.67
£ 8,000	£ 76.67	£21,000	£201.25
£ 9,000	£ 86.25	£22,000	£210.83
£10,000	£ 95.83	£23,000	£220.42
£11,000	£105.42	£24,000	£230.00
£12,000	£115.00	£25,000	£239.58
£13,000	£124.58	(Each additional £1,000 invested produces an average of £9.58 a month - £115.00 a year. Maximum of £200,000.)	
£14,000	£134.17		

As you can see, an investment in National Savings Income Bonds can make a lot of difference to your income. Currently you'll get 11½% pa interest on your Income Bonds. You'll get it paid monthly. And you'll get it all paid without deduction of tax.

Enjoy Life With A Monthly Income The interest is sent direct to your home or your bank on the 5th of each month.

It means some extra money coming in regularly to help pay the bills or simply to spend enjoying life.

Your Savings Are Never Touched Your capital is completely safe - the cash you put in is the cash you'll get back. The rate paid may change from time to time, but it will be kept competitive.

Interest is calculated on a day-to-day basis and is subject to tax if you are a taxpayer.

Getting Your Money Out You can have your money repaid at either three months or six months notice.

If you have held your Bonds for a year or more and have given six months notice, you won't lose a penny of interest.

For details of repayment see paragraph 6 of the prospectus (the full prospectus is published below).

Invest Here and Now You can be sure your investment will always provide a worthwhile income month in, month out. And you can invest here and now.

All you have to do is complete the coupon and send it with your cheque (payable to "National Savings," crossed "A/C Payee") to NSIB, Bonds and Stock Office, Blackpool, Lancs, FY3 9YP.

Or ask for an application form at your Post Office.

NATIONAL SAVINGS INCOME BONDS

PROSPECTUS

1. The Director of Savings is authorised by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to receive until further notice applications for National Savings Income Bonds ("Bonds").

2. The Bonds are a Government security, issued under the National Loans Act 1968. They are registered in the National Savings Stock Register and are subject to the Regulations relating to the National Savings Stock Register for the time being in force, so far as these are applicable. The principal of and interest on the Bonds will be a charge on the National Loans Fund.

PURCHASE

3.1 Subject to a minimum initial purchase of £2,000 (see paragraph 4) a Bond may be purchased for £1,000 or a multiple of that sum. Payment in full must be made at the time of application. The date of purchase will for all purposes be the date of receipt of the remittance, with a completed application form, at the Bonds and Stock Office, Blackpool, or such other place as the Director of Savings may specify.

3.2 An investment certificate, bearing the date of purchase, will be issued in respect of each purchase.

HOLDING LIMITS

4.1 No person may hold, either solely or jointly with any other person, less than £2,000 or more than £200,000 of Bonds. Bonds inherited from a deceased holder will not count towards this permitted maximum. Furthermore, Bonds held by a person as trustee will not count towards the maximum which he is permitted to hold in his personal capacity, nor will Bonds held in trust count towards the permitted maximum of a beneficiary's personal holding.

4.2 The Treasury may vary the maximum and minimum holding limits and the minimum initial purchase from time to time, upon giving notice. No such variation will prejudice any right under the prospectus enjoyed by a Bondholder immediately before the variation in respect of a Bond then held by him.

INTEREST

5.1 Interest will be calculated on a day-to-day basis from the date of purchase at a rate determined by the Treasury ("the Treasury rate").

5.2 Interest will be payable on the 5th day of each month. The Director of Savings may defer payments of accrued interest otherwise due in respect of a Bond within the period of six weeks following the date of purchase until the next interest date following the end of that period.

5.3 If on repayment the Bond has, by reason of paragraph 6.1, earned less interest than the total already paid in respect of the Bond under paragraph 5.2 the balance will be deducted from the sum to be repaid. Any interest earned on the Bond and not already paid before repayment will be added to the sum to be repaid. If, in the case of repayment under paragraph 6.2, it is not reasonably practicable to stop an interest payment from being made after the

repayment date the amount of that interest payment will be deducted from the sum to be repaid.

5.4 The Treasury may from time to time vary the Treasury rate upon giving six weeks' notice.

5.5 The Treasury may from time to time vary the intervals at and dates on which interest is payable, upon giving notice, and in so doing may specify holding limits above or below which any variation will apply. No variation will apply to a Bond issued before the variation unless the Bondholder agrees to such application.

5.6 Interest on a Bond registered in the sole name of a minor under seven years of age will normally be paid into a National Savings Bank account in the name of the minor.

5.7 Interest on a Bond will be paid without deduction of income tax, but it is subject to income tax and must be included in any return of income made to the Inland Revenue.

REPAYMENT

6.1 A Bondholder may obtain repayment of a Bond at par before redemption upon giving either three or six calendar months' notice. The amount of interest earned by the Bond from the date of purchase until repayment will be determined by the period of notice given by the Bondholder and by whether or not repayment takes place before the first anniversary of purchase.

	3 months' notice of repayment	6 months' notice of repayment
Repayment before the first anniversary of purchase	No interest in respect of any period	Interest at half the Treasury rate from the date of purchase to the date of repayment
Repayment on or after the first anniversary of purchase	Interest at the Treasury rate from the date of purchase to the date the notice of repayment is received at the Bonds and Stock Office	Interest at the Treasury rate from the date of purchase to the date of repayment

6.2 Where an application for repayment of a Bond is made after the death of the sole or sole surviving registered holder no fixed period of notice is required and the Bond will earn interest at the Treasury rate from the date of purchase up to the date of repayment, whether or not repayment occurs before the first anniversary of the purchase.

6.3 Any application for repayment of a Bond must be made in writing to the Bonds and Stock Office, Blackpool and accom-

panied by the investment certificate. The period of notice given by the Bondholder will be calculated from the date on which the application is received in the Bonds and Stock Office.

6.4 Application may be made for repayment of part of a Bond in an amount of £1,000 or a multiple of that sum provided that the holding of Bonds remaining after the part repayment will still fall within the minimum holding limit imposed by paragraph 4.1 as varied from time to time under paragraph 4.2. The preceding sub-paragraphs will apply to the part repaid as to a whole Bond, the remaining balance will have the same date of purchase and the same interest dates as were applicable to the original Bond immediately prior to repayment.

PAYMENTS

7 Interest will be payable direct to a National Savings Bank or other bank account or by crossed warrant sent by post. Capital will be repayable direct to a National Savings Bank account or by crossed warrant sent by post.

MINORS

8 A Bond held by a minor under the age of seven years, either solely or jointly with any other person, will not be repayable, except with the consent of the Director of Savings.

TRANSFER

9 Bonds will not be transferable except with the consent of the Director of Savings. Transfer of a Bond or part of a Bond will only be allowed in an amount of £1,000 or multiple of that sum and will not be allowed if the holding of the transferor or transferee would thereby be outside the holding limits imposed by paragraph 4.1 as varied from time to time under paragraph 4.2. The Director of Savings will normally give consent in the case of, for example, devolution of Bonds on the death of a holder but not to any proposed transfer which is by way of sale or for any consideration.

NOTICE

10 The Treasury will give any notice required under paragraph 4.2, 5.4, 5.5 or 11 of the prospectus in the London, Edinburgh and Belfast Gazettes or in any other manner which they think fit. If notice is given otherwise than in the Gazettes it will as soon as is reasonably possible thereafter be recorded in them.

GUARANTEED LIFE OF BONDS

11 Each Bond may be held for a guaranteed initial period of 10 years from the first interest date after the date of purchase. Thereafter, interest will continue to be payable under the terms of the prospectus until the redemption of the Bond. The Bond will be redeemed at par either at the end of the guaranteed initial period or on any interest date thereafter, in either case upon the giving of six months' notice by the Treasury. The Director of Savings will write to the Bondholder before redemption, at the last recorded address for the Bondholder, informing him of the date of redemption notified by the Treasury.

APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL SAVINGS INCOME BOND

To NSIB, Bonds and Stock Office, Blackpool, Lancs FY3 9YP

1 I/We accept the terms of the Prospectus and apply for a Bond to the value of: £ ,000 Initial minimum of £2,000 and multiples of £1,000 to a maximum of £200,000

2 Surname(s) Full Christian name(s) or forename(s) Mr/Mrs/Miss

Address (including postcode)

Day Month Year

3 Name of Trust (if applicable) Date of Birth (if under 7)

NAME AND ADDRESS FOR DESPATCH OF INVESTMENT CERTIFICATE (if different from above)

Name

Address

4 DIVIDENDS TO BE PAID BY CREDIT TO (if not to a National Savings Bank or other bank account, enter name and address to which dividend warrants should be sent)

Bank

Address

A/c Name(s) A/c No

5 Signature(s) Date

Kremlin leaders divided on return to Geneva arms talks

From Richard Owen, Moscow

Recent discrepancies in Soviet statements suggest differences within the Kremlin over whether Moscow should return to the Geneva arms talks, according to diplomatic analysts.

On Friday *Pravda* said that for a resumption of the Geneva talks to become possible NATO would have to "restore the old order of things, when there were no American missiles in Europe". *Pravda* said Chancellor Helmut Kohl was guilty of "shameless deception" when he suggested that statements by President Andropov had hinted at Soviet flexibility and a return to the INF negotiations.

On Saturday, however, Mr Andropov Gromyko the Soviet Foreign Minister, repeated the formula used earlier by Mr Andropov himself under which the West would only have to show "willingness" or "readiness" to withdraw cruise and Pershing 2 for Moscow to reconsider.

In talks with Mr Stefan Olszowski, the Polish Foreign Minister, Mr Gromyko noted there were voices in the West who were "willing to discuss the issue of the deployment of nuclear weapons".

Mr Gromyko also noted that the Soviet Union would be ready to do so provided the United States and other NATO countries display "readiness to return to the situation which existed prior to the commencement of the deployment of American missiles in Europe".

Mr Gromyko said that the Soviet Union was ready to discuss the issue of the deployment of nuclear weapons over whether - and when - to break off the INF talks appeared to have continued after the Soviet walkout, with some taking the hard line view that all American missiles must be removed as a fundamental precondition of any move toward resumption.

This hard line is expected to be maintained by Marshal Ogarov, the Soviet Chief of Staff, at a week-long meeting today. It may also be reflected in the meeting of Warsaw Pact defence ministers in Sofia attended by Marshal Dmitry Ustinov, the Soviet Defence Minister, who arrived in the Bulgarian capital yesterday.

One Soviet official remarked that these differences were a matter of degree, but diplomats commented that differences of emphasis were often a mark of wider disagreement in Soviet politics.

Observers said that conflicting interpretations of Mr Andropov's remarks by competing sections of opinion in the Kremlin could be expected until the Soviet leader re-emerges to take full command. He is due to chair meetings of the Central Committee and Supreme Soviet at the end of this month, although there are still doubts about his health.

Red Star, the armed forces newspaper, blamed Washington yesterday for the breakdown of the Geneva talks, and said that "in the present situation, continuation of the talks would only serve as a cover for actions

by the United States against European and international security".

● **SCHWARZES GMUND:** Four saboteurs, including an American priest, penetrated a United States army base here yesterday and smashed a 10-ton truck with hammers and crowbars in an attempt to block deployment of new nuclear missiles, authorities said (AP reports).

Armed guards quickly surrounded the unnamed group until West German police arrived at Hardt Barracks and took them away. All four were released several hours later.

● **ATHENS:** Greece has criticized the Soviet counter measures to the deployment of Western medium-range nuclear missiles in Europe, on the ground that they would "aggravate the already tense political and military situation" (Mario Modiano writes).

The criticism, although tempered, was unusual coming as it did from Mr Andreas Papandreu, the Greek Socialist Prime Minister, who is a staunch opponent of the Western nuclear arms race.

Mr Papandreu also wrote a letter to Mr Andropov.

● **OLIVE BRANCH:** Protesters carried olive branches and banners saying "Jobs not Bombs" staged a peace demonstration yesterday near the building where leaders of the 10 Communist Market countries were opening their three-day summit meeting (AP reports).

● **CAZANIA:** More than 1,000 anti-nuclear demonstrators gathered in this Sicilian city with a US naval base, where NATO missiles are being stored (AP reports).

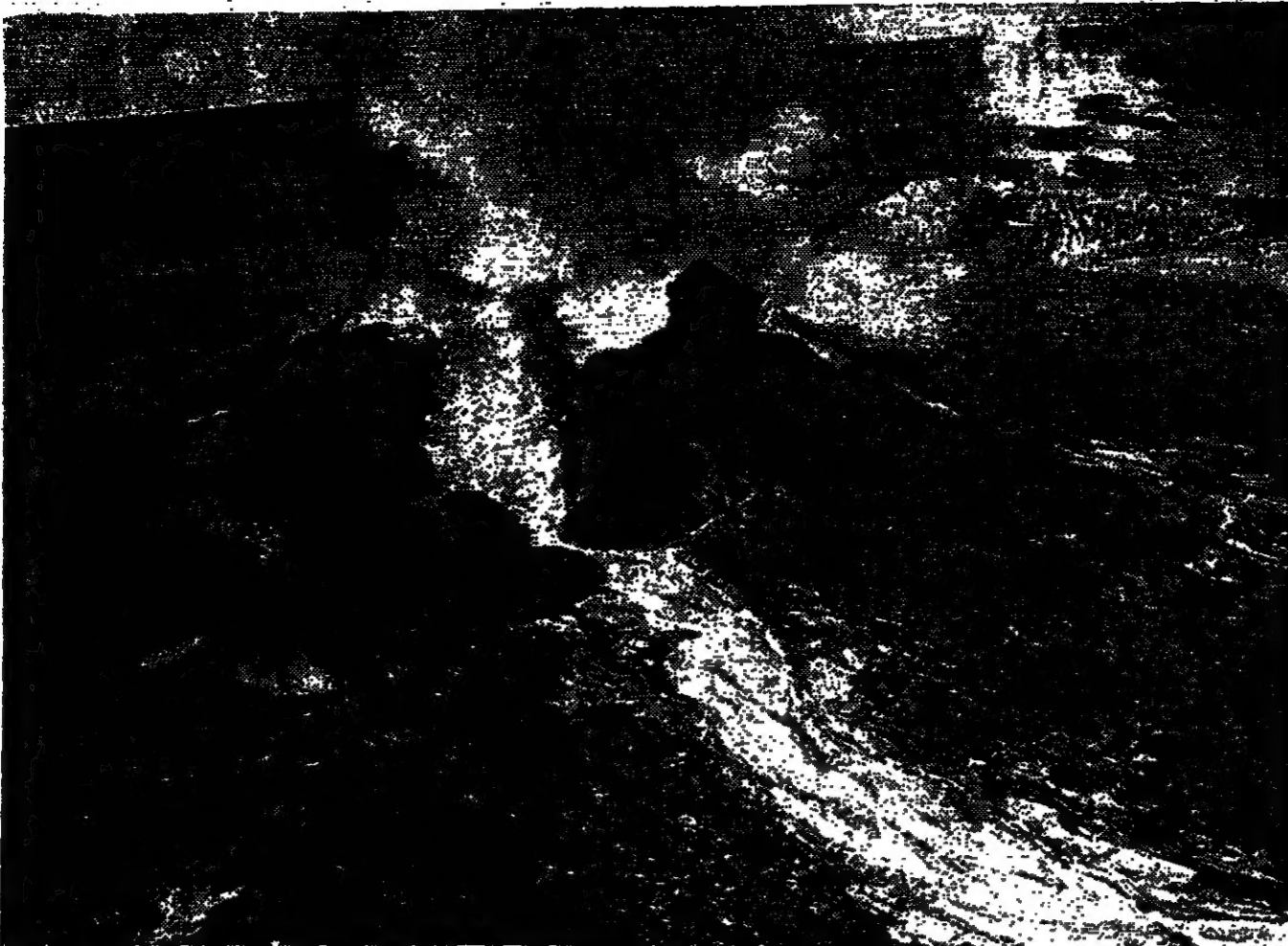
But two few protesters turned up and there was a 2½ mile gap in the chain.

● **Cardinal Casaroli:** The Vatican has offered to mediate between the Soviet Union and the United States over the issue of the deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe.

● **Mediation offer by Vatican:** The Vatican has offered to mediate between the Soviet Union and the United States over the issue of the deployment of nuclear weapons in Europe.

● **Rome (AP):** Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, the Vatican's Secretary of State, said yesterday that the Holy See wanted to "mediate" between the United States and the Soviet Union about reviving the talks on limiting medium-range nuclear arms in Europe.

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River of fire: Lava flowing from the Pu'u O cinder cone on the eastern rift zone of Kilauea volcano in Hawaii. The volcano has been erupting intermittently since the beginning of January.

Nicaragua holds out olive branch

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

A decision by the left-wing Sandinista regime in Nicaragua to hold elections in 1985 will offer an olive branch to the US-backed rebels, according to the leaders of the Reagan Administration's key foreign policy agencies.

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Iran today: Imprisonment at home and war abroad

From Richard Owen, Tehran

The Iranian government has announced that it will allow the release of prisoners, but it has also announced that it will not allow the release of prisoners who are involved in the revolution.

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Only 10% vote in Soweto elections

From Richard Owen, Johannesburg

Johannesburg - Barely 10 per cent of eligible voters in Soweto, Johannesburg's black satellite town, went to the polls this weekend to elect a local authority that under new legislation will give black municipalities almost as much autonomy as white town councils (Ray Kennedy writes).

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Commentary

Geoffrey Smith

How far can Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe afford to play it tough in Athens? In terms of British domestic politics it must be in their interests to be very tough indeed.

It is true that the general election this summer effectively removed British membership of the European Community as a party political issue in this country. Labour leaders found, to their surprise, that voters did not like the proposal to withdraw, and the party is not likely to make that mistake again. But while the British people are now reconciled to membership, this is a judgment of the head rather than the heart.

It was the fear of losing jobs, not devotion to the spirit of the Community, that made voters tremble at the thought of coming out. They do not want to see Britain alone in the economic cold, but they will be reassured to see British ministers battling strenuously for British interests in Athens, Brussels or any other seat of Community power.

If Mrs Thatcher were to return from this summit meeting with no agreement, she would be likely to find that public opinion would rally behind her. But if she were to bring back a compromise, she would find herself in trouble. Last week's mini-rebellion of Conservative MPs in the House of Commons was a warning of what might happen.

There are some Conservative MPs who would not be happy with an increase in the VAT contribution to the EEC under any circumstances. They do not approve of the Community and they do not want what are known as its "own resources" to be enlarged. But there are not enough members of this persuasion to mount a damaging revolt.

A tough line could prove risky

The critical test for any agreement will be whether it satisfies the pragmatic critics: those who would be prepared to accept a higher VAT contribution, but only if there are sufficient concessions in return on restricting British net payments to the Community budget and the level of expenditure in the common agricultural policy.

What concessions would be sufficient for this purpose? Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey have less room for manoeuvre now than they would have had immediately after their election victory. They have had an uncomfortable few months, and Sir Geoffrey in particular would find it harder to persuade dubious backbenchers to trust his judgment.

But they should be able to see a settlement of the world's permanent restriction of Britain's net contributions to the Community budget, taking into account any increase in VAT, at least as effectively as they have been reduced by temporary arrangements over the past few years; and offer the firm prospect of securing some reduction in Community spending on agriculture in real terms.

But can Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey afford to be so tough in Athens as to give themselves a real chance of winning such terms? There are some in Britain, as well as many in other member countries, who will see the British to take such a line would be an unwarrantable risk with the cohesion and perhaps even the existence, of the Community.

This is the criticism that has been made time and again of Mrs Thatcher's tactics in the Community. Yet if she has not been so persistent, tiresome, though it has been for those who have had to listen to her practising the art of repetition, she would not have persuaded her partners to talk her demands as seriously as they are now doing.

When she first attended European summit meetings President Giscard and Chancellor Schmidt regarded her with barely concealed disdain. Relations with President Mitterrand and Chancellor Kohl are much better. The French proposals last week for controlling Community expenditure went some way to meeting the British case.

These proposals would not effectively control the proportion of the Community budget being spent on agriculture, and it is always necessary in such negotiations to see how general principles will be given effect in detailed arrangements. But the tabling of this initiative confirms that other as well as Britain need an agreement. The only settlement that will be in the long-term interests of the Community if one that is lasting, and it will be lasting only if it deals with the issues that have divided its members.

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Arafat wins UN stamp of legitimacy

From Richard Owen, New York

In granting Mr Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, his request for the use of UN flag on ships, the Security Council has given him a stamp of legitimacy that will serve him well in his future political dealings.

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EEC heads of state face long and tough agenda

From Ian Murray, Athens

The European leaders at the Athens summit will have to work through one of the

Poland: The conflict goes on

Workers scuffle with militiamen over Wujek miners' memorial

From Roger Boyes, Warsaw

The memory of miners killed by riot police soon after martial law was imposed on the bleak landscape of Polish Silesia yesterday.

Some 500 workers, led by a delegation from the Gdansk shipyard, tried to place a commemorative plaque on the walls of the Wujek colliery, the scene of the bloodiest clashes between the banned union Solidarity and police almost two years ago.

However they found their way blocked by militiamen and scuffles ensued. The workers chanted "Solidarity" and several dozen demonstrators including the Gdansk crane driver and human rights activist Mrs Anna Walentynowicz were bundled into the police vehicles.

The dead miners also figured in the broadcast sermon of the Bishop of Katowice and in a Mass in Warsaw celebrated by the outspoken priest, Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, who is being investigated for the allegedly anti-government content of his sermons.

Many miners, wearing their

traditional uniform and black military-style shakos, joined in the prayers for the strikers while three burly steelworkers stood guard over the priest in case the police tried again to summon him for interrogation. The police tried to collect the priest on Friday but were rebuffed by a group of singing parishioners.

The occasion for the protests is the traditional miners holiday which coincides with the feast

day of St Barbara. The holiday has become a time for hard tones from the Government, when leaders use no-nonsense language that they hope will appeal to Polish working people.

General Jaruzelski, the Polish leader, who has been visiting the Silesian coal-mining district, admitted at the weekend that raising food prices next month will be difficult and unpopular.

He also bitterly criticized President Regan for his defiance and sanctions policies.

Nobel visit: Mrs Danuta Walesa and her son Bogdan have been given a passport to travel to Oslo to receive the Nobel peace prize on behalf of her husband Mr Lech Walesa, the leader of the banned Solidarity union. Mr Walesa had not applied to attend the ceremony.

Draft Bill spells out passport curbs

From Our Own Correspondent, Warsaw

After years of discussion on how to liberalize Poland's passport laws, the authorities have come up with draft proposals that simply specify the reasons why Poles are not allowed to travel abroad.

The draft Bill being presented to the Parliament this week has been long awaited by the population who had hoped that it would become easier to visit the West. In 1981 as many as 1.27 million Poles were allowed

to travel to the West and only four per cent were refused passports. But by 1982 the figure had dropped to 340,000, the result of martial law.

However, the new Bill, a copy of which was made available to *The Times*, catalogues the reasons why a passport can be refused to a Pole, does not provide for a right of appeal and if anything gives more powers to the issuing authorities. The right to travel may be refused without detailed justification if the applicants possess state, defence or economic secrets.

Some independent Members of Parliament had agreed that passports should be freely issued, rather like identity cards or driving licences, to be used repeatedly and that Poles who prolonged their stay abroad should not be treated like criminals when they returned. However, the draft amendments were passed 17 to 3 at the parliamentary commission stage, thanks to the votes of the Communist deputies, so there is little doubt that the legislation will be approved when it comes before Parliament next week.



Oslo bound: Mrs Danuta Walesa showing off the passport she will use to collect her husband's Nobel prize.

US Army remains real power in Grenadian vacuum

From Trevor Fishlock, New York

The United States Army remains the power in the land in Grenada and is likely to be so well into next year. Although more than 1,000 troops will be withdrawn by Christmas, nearly 2,000 will stay behind as the island works its way through a period of political limbo.

President Reagan has to withdraw what are designated as combat troops within 60 days of the October 25 invasion to avoid trouble in Congress under the War Powers Act, which limits his freedom as Commander-in-Chief.

But support forces will remain. Although many of these troops specialize in construction, engineering and other tasks and are described as non-combat troops, they nevertheless constitute a strong armed force. They provide a backbone of military strength to the 400-man Caribbean peacekeeping force and will continue to do so.

Some American commentators feel the United States Army has done its job and should leave Grenada quickly. But given the circumstances in the island, it is hard to see how that can be done.

only be filled slowly. For example, the island needs a police force and this cannot be built up quickly. Grenada radio reported at the weekend that the Police Commissioner had been dismissed and replaced by an officer from Barbados.

Elections are unlikely to be held before the end of next year, and in the meantime the island will remain under the makeshift Government of Sir Paul Scoon. The titular head is Sir Paul Scoon, Governor-General and representative of the Queen. He is in many respects the front-man for the Americans who control the island through Mr Charles Gillispie, their ambassador, and Major-General Jack Farns, commander of the American forces in Grenada.

The small advisory council made up of people chosen for being non-political as well as worthy, clearly has a difficult and uncertain role, considering the realities of the situation. It has been weakened because Mr Alistair McIntyre, an economist and Deputy Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva, has refused the chairmanship of the council.

There is a vacuum that can

Holidaymakers to use common European currency next summer

By Patricia Clough

Holidaymakers travelling on the Continent next summer will be able to pay their bills in a currency for which there are no coins or banknotes: the ECU.

Four French banks will form a company in Paris this week to issue traveller's cheques in European Currency Units, the artificial currency invented by the European Community.

A fifth partner in the company, to be called the "Société Française de Cheques de Voyage en ECU" will be a French traveller's cheque firm partly owned by American Express, which has been providing technical advice.

M. Dominique Rambure, a vice-president of Crédit Lyonnais, told *The Times* they planned to make the cheques available to the public in time for next year's holiday season. They will closely resemble American Express cheques.

The group hopes to sell them in Britain through one of the big banks and M. Rambure indicated it could well be Lloyds. Mr Bill Bullock, chief operations manager for Lloyds Bank Overseas Division said: "I am sure they will approach us and I am sure we will say yes."

The ECU has the advantage of being the most stable currency in Europe so that a traveller would run less risk of a fall in the value of the cheques he was carrying.

"Someone who travels a lot

in Europe, an American businessman, for instance, would be interested in handling only one currency rather than coping with many different ones," he said.

When a traveller presented an ECU cheque in, say a hotel, the hotel would look up the current rate and convert the ECUs into local currency.

Both M. Rambure and Mr Bullock conceded that the ECU may not be an instant hit. "It will take some time before the man in the street is confident about carrying it around and the retailer is prepared to accept it," Mr Bullock added.

The ECU is worth around 57 pence at present. It is based on all the currencies in the European Monetary System and the pound sterling and therefore fluctuates less than the individual currencies.

It is the unit used by the EEC in all its dealings. It is often used by banks and businesses for commercial transactions, and has become the third most widely used currency, after the American dollar and the Deutschmark, for bond issues.

The travellers' cheques scheme would be the first time it has been used for personal dealings. It was "one of the first steps" towards a real common European money, Mr Bullock said. However, he admitted that there was still a long way to go.

Vietnamese set for offensive in Cambodia

From Neil Kelly, Bangkok

South-East Asia is bracing itself for a new offensive by Vietnamese forces in Cambodia. Intelligence sources are reporting widespread preparation in western areas and the arrival of new supplies of Soviet tanks, other weapons and supplies.

Squadron-leader Prasong Soonsiri, Thailand's national security chief, said the new Soviet weapons had just been unloaded at Kompong Som, Cambodia's main port. He said Thai government agencies and international relief organizations have been making preparations for the Vietnamese offensive which could drive 250,000 Cambodian refugees into Thailand.

South Koreans sink spy boat from the North

Seoul (AP) - South Korean forces have sunk a North Korean spy boat and captured two armed infiltrators after a gun battle near the southern port city of Pusan.

General Lee Ki-Baik, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said two armed agents were apprehended while swimming to shore on the outskirts of Pusan on Saturday night.

General Lee said a North Korean spy boat was later sunk about six miles south of Yongdo, a small island connected to Pusan by a bridge.

The Korean Broadcasting System said the two infiltrators threw hand grenades at South Korean guard posts and tried to commit suicide by biting their tongues as they were captured.

The agents were taken to a military hospital in Pusan.

Malaysian party backs change in constitution

From M. G. G. Pillai, Kuala Lumpur

Malaysia's long-running political crisis moved forward a step at the weekend when Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, the Prime Minister, won the endorsement of his United Malays National Organisation (UMNO).

He now has the support of his party, his Cabinet and much of the public for his proposed amendments to the constitution which would limit the powers of the nine hereditary rulers, the Sultans, and the King, who is elected once every five years from among their ranks.

The constitutional amendments would remove the rulers' powers to delay, or veto, legislation. In addition, the Prime Minister, and not the King, would have the sole right to declare an emergency.

Datuk Seri Mahathir insists that the rulers must accept the principle of a constitutional monarchy, but the rulers say the amendments are unconstitutional since they were not consulted.

The Prime Minister and the rulers do not want to widen the conflict. The King signed seven bills into law on Friday, as the



Datuk Seri Mahathir: Slow progress towards reform

rulers said he would. But both are rounding up their supporters. UMNO has organized large crowds to meet Datuk Seri Mahathir as he tours the country to whip up support. The rulers are meeting with the traditional native leaders, and in two states there have also been public demonstrations of support for them.

The Prime Minister's haste in getting the amendments through Parliament last August came after reported threats to "make life difficult" for him by one of the Sultans who could become King in April next year.

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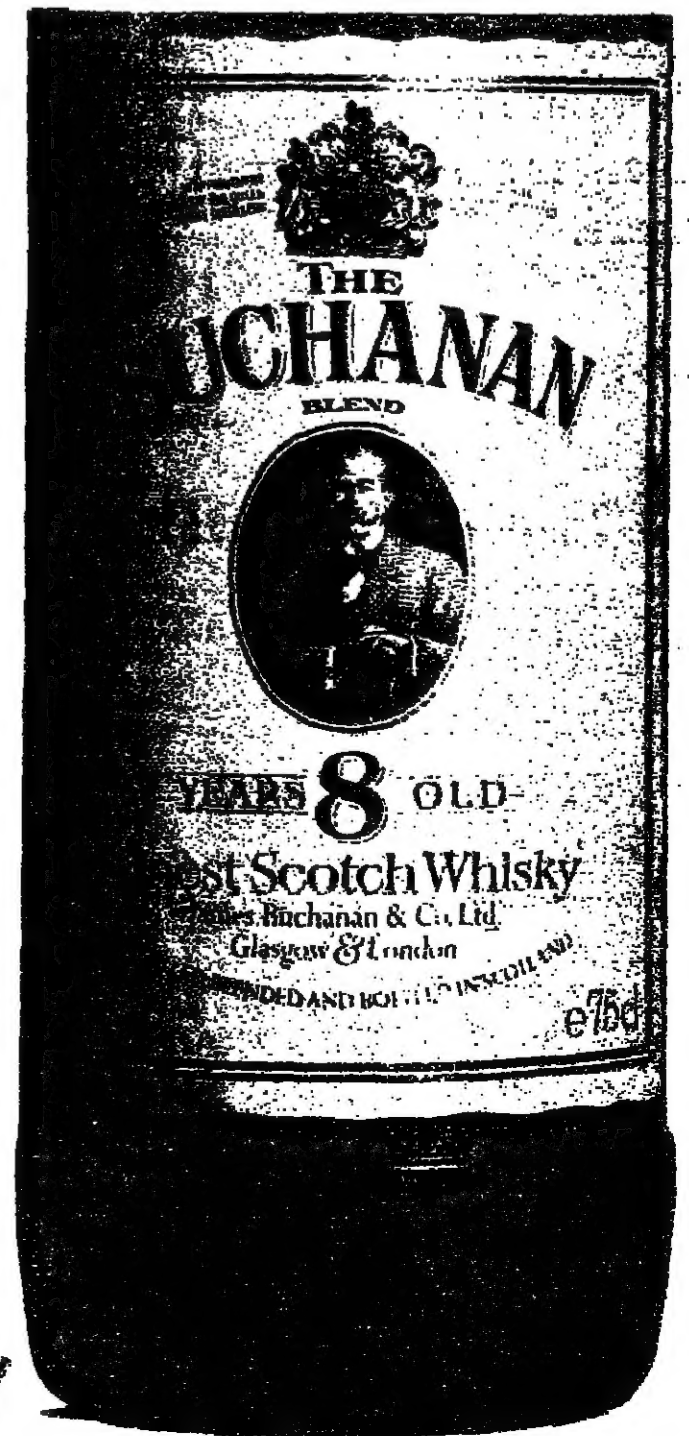
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Turkish Cypriot minister met with full honours in Bangladesh

From Michael Hamlyn Dhaka

The Foreign Minister of the self-proclaimed Turkish republic of Cyprus arrived in Bangladesh yesterday to take part in the Islamic foreign ministers conference due to open here tomorrow.

Mr Kemal Atakol was met with honours befitting the foreign minister of a fully independent republic. Bangladesh's Foreign Minister, Mr A. R. Shamsud Doha, greeted him at Zia International airport and he was led to a microphone to make a statement.

"We have come to get the support of the Muslim countries," Mr Atakol said. "We are ready to extend our peaceful hands to negotiate on equal terms to set up a bi-communal and bi-zonal federal republic."

The Turkish Cypriot community has always had observer status at Islamic conferences, and that is how they will start this one.

"They will have observer status again at least to begin with," said Mr Niaz A. Nalik, the Pakistani Foreign Secretary. The subject of the Turkish Cypriot Republic will be on the agenda of the conference.

Bangladesh and Malaysia may find themselves in a

position of some embarrassment at the Islamic conference over the Turkish Cypriot Republic. They were both parties to the Commonwealth communiqué issued last week in Delhi, which rejected the UDI, and called on all members to refrain from recognizing them.

When I asked Lieutenant General H. M. Ershad in Delhi whether he intended to recognize the secession, he neither confirmed nor denied it. He asked meaningfully: "Do you think that they are going to give up their independence?"

The Bangladesh political opposition declared yesterday that they had no intention of disrupting the conference, but instead issued a warning to the conference to take no notice of what the Bangladesh delegation said. They described the regime as "Israeli stooges" and worse than that you cannot say in the present Islamic circumstances.

The opposition statement, issued by the 15 party coalition led by Sheikh Hasina Wajed, daughter of the assassinated Prime Minister Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, called for a general strike throughout the country on December 20, after the conference is safely over.

Machel turns to the West in hour of need

In the first of three articles on Mozambique, Stephen Taylor, recently in Maputo, explains why this socialist country is turning to the West.

MOZAMBIQUE Part 1

President Samora Machel, the latest of a string of African leaders whose Marxist principles have been tempered by the need to attract Western capital to a crippled economy, received an unusual letter just before setting off on his European tour in October. It came from a community of British Marxists in Mozambique and their appeal to the onetime revolutionary not to meet Mrs Thatcher suggested they were hurt by a betrayal.

It is questionable whether, as the protesters believe, the group of guerrilla commanders and idealistic intellectuals who led Mozambique to independence in 1975, have sold out their egalitarian commitment. Many would maintain that Frelimo's zeal has remained remarkably unshaken.

What is beyond doubt, however, is that this sudden turn to the West from a traditional ally, the Soviet Union, is symptomatic of desperation over economic chaos, a drought which is killing thousands of peasants and a guerrilla war sponsored by South Africa. An informed Mozambican source says: "We are going through our worst crisis since independence."

There has been talk before about a fundamental policy change in Maputo but this time, diplomatic sources say,

the evidence is unmistakable. Three times refused admittance to Comecon (probably because Moscow cannot afford another expensive dependent like Cuba or Vietnam), Mozambique is now talking of joining the IMF and the World Bank with the EEC. Western governments are being asked for military assistance and Western investment is being courted.

Frelimo officials see President Machel's enthusiastic reception in Europe - particularly Britain and Portugal, the former colonial power where the scars of the Frelimo struggle could have been expected to run deep - as an important signal to South Africa, ultimately the principal factor in foreign-policy considerations.

A series of meetings over the past year between Mozambicans and South African ministers has done little to ease mutual antagonism. Twice since May Frelimo has launched attacks on what it alleged were guerrilla bases of the African National Congress in Maputo. Although Frelimo has been assisting the ANC, correspondents taken to the scene of the attacks saw no evidence of guerrilla bases.

But the Mozambicans' main concern is that South Africa is concerned, in its support for the Mozambique resistance Movement (MNR) whose insurgency is crippling the nation and damaging other neighbouring states, notably Zimbabwe and Malawi.

Frelimo hopes that ultimately dialogue, and pressure from the West, will persuade Pretoria to restrain the MNR. Although officials will not admit as much, it is indicated



President Machel: Worst crisis since independence.

that in return Mozambique would limit its help to the ANC.

Since the start of the thaw with the West, signalled by a visit by Mr Joaquim Chissano, the Foreign Minister, to New

York a year ago, Washington has shown greater preparedness to condemn South African regional policy. After saboteurs blew up petrol storage tanks in Beira the Reagan Administration let it be known that

South Africa had been firmly informed there were limits beyond which destabilization would not be tolerated.

For its part, the United States Administration is clearly delighted to have gained the ear of one of the few statesmen capable of breaking the Namibia deadlock while at the same time scoring a propaganda victory over the Soviet Union.

For the time being however a congressional ban on aid to Mozambique remains in force. For all the improvement in relations with the West, a big question mark must hang over the likelihood of significant investment being attracted in the short term. The cost of creating an infrastructure to exploit local resources would be enormous, road and rail networks are inadequate and the ports inefficient. Above all there is the war, afflicting all but one of the 10 provinces.

Valuable resources do undoubtedly exist. Mineral surveys, never carried out by the Portuguese, have disclosed the largest known reserves of tantalum, a high-value mineral used in space technology, penicillins, huge coal reserves, natural gas and, probably oil.

Lack of statistical information on the economy has bothered both potential investors and the IMF and the Bank of Mozambique is working on a flow chart expected to be available in the new year. In the meantime informed opinion in Maputo puts the external debt at between \$1,100m and \$1,200m. Until recently Mozambique nevertheless had a good credit rating but since February it has defaulted on a number of loans.

Tomorrow: The guerrilla war

Obote loses two top men in air crash

From Charles Harrison Nairobi

The Chief-of-Staff of the Uganda Army, Major-General David Oyite-Ojok, died in a helicopter crash 100 miles north of Kampala at the weekend.

The Uganda Air Force Commander, Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred Otoo, was among another eight Ugandans killed when the army helicopter nosedived and crashed soon after refuelling at an army camp.

The Major-General, aged 49 and second most senior officer in the Ugandan Army, was a prominent political figure. He was a fellow-tribesman of President Milton Obote, and in addition to his army duties held the key post of chairman of the coffee marketing board. Coffee is Uganda's main export, accounting for almost all the country's export earnings.

The Ugandan authorities quickly denied claims by a guerrilla organization, the National Resistance Army, to have shot down the helicopter, and there appears to be no substance in the NRA's claim.

The crash occurred after dark on Friday night, when Major-General Oyite-Ojok and his party were returning to Kampala after visiting army units in northern Uganda. They stopped at Kasozi, an army post near Masindi, to refuel, and the helicopter crashed in flames, killing all on board, within a few seconds of taking off.

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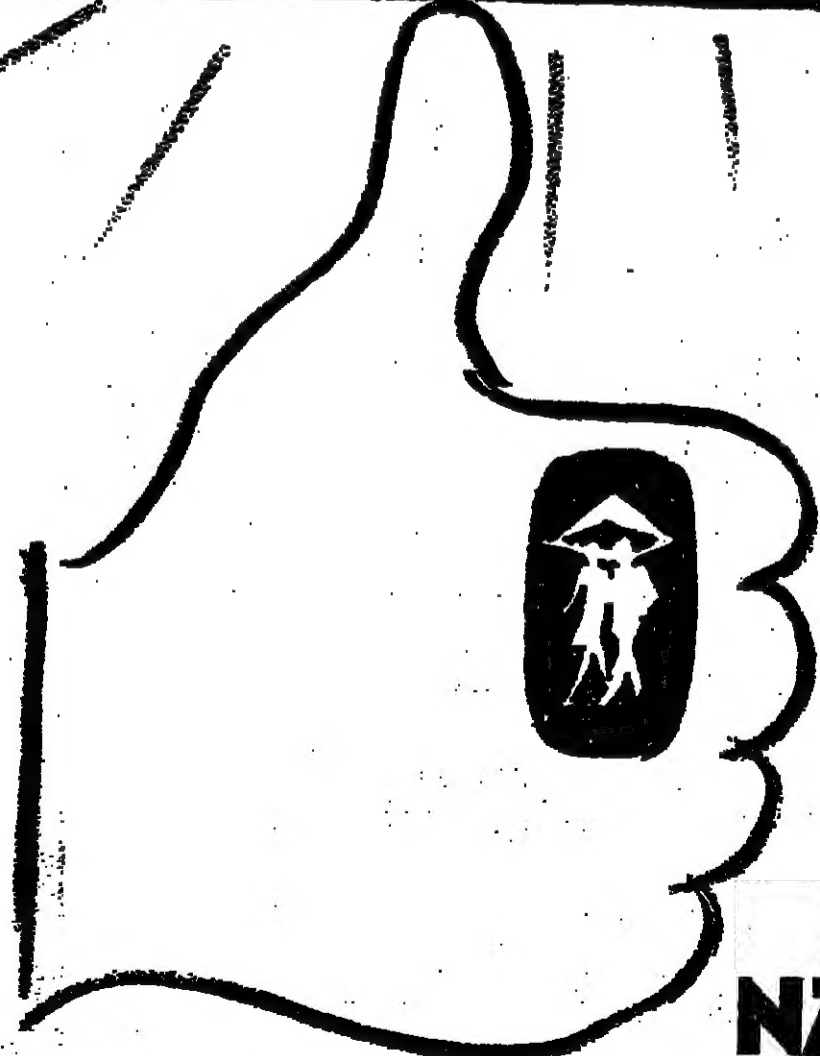
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Namibian independence

Why US insists on Angola linkage

From Nicholas Ashford, Washington

"We have the whole package on the table, with everything on it but the ribbon," remarked Dr Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, over lunch the other day, referring to the six-year negotiations on the independence of Namibia (South West Africa).

The ribbon to which he was referring is American insistence that withdrawal of South African forces from Namibia under the UN settlement plan for the disputed territory should be accompanied by a parallel withdrawal of Cuban troops from neighbouring Angola.

This question of linkage has been holding up agreement for the best part of a year. Dr Crocker conceded there had been no progress at all for the past three months.

He said the delay had been caused by increased tension in the region, referring to South African attacks against Angola and a spreading of the civil war in that country. "The level of violence had gotten everybody frightened, so there has been a delay."

Dr Crocker was almost disdainfully dismissive of the criticism the Commonwealth summit meeting in Delhi levelled at the US because of its insistence on linkage.

We said the US regarded the Commonwealth as a "kind of gentleman's version of the (UN) General Assembly", implying that it produced little but hot air.

Its rejection of linkage was no different than having the General Assembly reject linkage. "If the Commonwealth has a solution to the Namibian problem, let them do it."

Britain, which is a member of the five-nation Western contact group on Namibia, was a signatory to the Commonwealth communiqué in which the criticism of the US was made. This did not seem to worry Dr Crocker, who predicted that Britain and the other members of the contact group (France, West Germany, Canada and the US) "will be on board when our ship gets into port."

He made it clear that only linkage was delaying agreement on the UN settlement plan. "There are no more Namibian issues left to be resolved." He was confident there would eventually be a successful outcome.



Dr Crocker: Criticism by Commonwealth rejected

Lee Kuan Yew criticizes Delhi summit

Singapore (AP) - Mr Lee Kuan Yew the Prime Minister of Singapore believes last week's meeting of Commonwealth leaders in Delhi was an exercise in watered down positions and fudged meanings rendered to reach a consensus statement.

He made the comments at a meeting with five Singapore newspaper editors on Friday, and they were published yesterday.

Mr Lee said many of the 44 leaders did not say what they had in their minds or hearts but spoke to make the most impact on delegates to add words or phrases to the communiqué.

"One painful price that has to be paid for an agreed communiqué is the endless arguing and compromising, then debating, manoeuvring and again compromising."

Liberals sweep Northern Territory poll

From Our Correspondent Melbourne

The Country Liberal Party, led by Mr Paul Everingham, The Chief Minister, has won a landslide victory in the Northern Territory election.

A swing of 12 per cent to the ruling party means that it will have at least 19 seats in the 25-seat House of Assembly, with the balance going to the Labour Party. The final result of Saturday's poll will not be known for some days.

Mr Andrew Peacock, the Federal opposition leader, said the Northern Territory result was a mandate for Mr Bob Hawke's federal Government.

Mr Hawke congratulated Mr Everingham but said Canberra still retained the support of the Northern Territory.

Zimbabwe investigates Muzorewa abroad

From Our Correspondent, Harare

Bishop Abel Muzorewa, who is being held in detention in Zimbabwe, has not been charged with a crime because investigations of his allegedly subversive activities are not complete, the Minister of State Security, Mr Emerson Munangagwa, told MPs here.

In reply to questions from MPs of both the white Republican Front and the bishop's United African National Council (UANC), Mr Munangagwa said inquiries were in progress in several foreign countries.

Bishop Muzorewa was first detained on October 31 for making "derogatory statements about Zimbabwe" while on a tour of Israel. Government counsel subsequently admitted there were "irregularities" in that detention notice and

withdrew it, but immediately issued a new order detaining the bishop as a potential danger to public order and safety. Mr Muzorewa has accused him of conspiring against Zimbabwe with Israel and South Africa.

TEL AVIV: Bishop Muzorewa spent five weeks in the Holy Land during the autumn, but the Israeli Government became aware of his presence only three days before his departure on October 23, according to Dr James Flemming, Director of the Jerusalem Centre for Biblical Studies in the old city of Jerusalem (Moshe Brilliant writes).

Bishop Muzorewa had been totally absorbed in studies and tours relating to the life of Jesus and had had no time for politics, Dr Flemming added.

THE ARTS

Picking out the strengths of a 'timeless' Requiem

The War Requiem will last at least until we have another war. A work that Stravinsky chose to copy in his own requiem a few years later cannot be entirely without interest, and now it has an excellent new recording that goes for its strengths directly and unerringly.

Of course, nobody could fail to notice that the character of the piece springs from its confrontation of the Latin liturgy with the poetry of Wilfred Owen, but Simon Rattle makes the friction work more productively than ever before in my experience. The Owen songs are not just personal glosses on the text, which would be vulgar: they slice into the ceremony, shocking.

The arrival of the first is quite outrageous. The instruments of the chamber orchestra, rounding in protest, cut a swathe through the chorus and orchestra intoning the introit. It is not simply that they sound nearer: they have more presence, and more blood in their music.

So the work proceeds. There is much in this performance of choral incisiveness and orchestral energy, but the crucial points are always those where the worlds of ritual and poetry collide. The repetitions at the end of the Abraham and Isaac poem, like so many attempts to find a way out of the labyrinth, are almost unendurable, the dialogues of the Lacrimosa and Agnus Dei exasperating and pathetic.

Rattle and Britten are well served by the soloists. Elisabeth Söderström submerges her identity to become a brave leader of the collective act of atonement. Robert Tear, by contrast, is very much himself in every consonant, but justly so, since the tenor must bear the main burden of personal expression. Thomas Allen is the more sober baritone.

Altogether this is a performance that gives us the War Requiem as the fruit of unchallengeable and important experience, besides which the record of early chamber music by Britten takes us back a quarter-century towards the springs of innocence.

Apart from the Phantasy Oboe Quartet op. 2, the works come from the now substantial repertoire of music brought to light since the composer's death. Much the most important of them is the set of *Temporal Variations* for oboe and piano, but there are also

Britten: War Requiem Söderström, Tear, Allen, CBSO Chorus, Boys of Christ Church Oxford, CBSO/Rattle, EMI SLS 1077573 (2 records)

Britten: Early chamber music Wickens, Constable, Gabrieli Quartet, Unicorn-Kanchana DKK 9020

Mahler: Symphony No 6 LPO/Tennstedt, EMI SLS 1435743 (2 records)

Mahler: Symphony No 3 Darnesch, Chicago SO Chorus, Glen Elyn Children's Chorus, Chicago SO/Solti

two charming *Insect Pieces* for the same duo as well as a surprisingly vague Fantasy String Quintet of 1932 and a constellation of movements associated with the quartet suite *Go Play, Boy, Play*. The soft-toned and highly musical oboist Derek Wickens has most to do, and is well supported by John Constable and the Gabrieli Quartet.

All these pieces date from before Britten's creative discovery of Mahler, who now looms so large in our musical life, that no young composer could avoid him. Among several new recordings, Klaus Tennstedt's of the Sixth Symphony and Sir Georg Solti's of the Third are outstanding, though for utterly different

reasons. Mr Tennstedt seizes at every muscle of his symphony, whereas Sir Georg, though always very much in control, aims for the broader sweep, and brings the concluding adagio to a rare pitch of glowing affirmation.

The finale of the Sixth Symphony, of course, is something very different, and it is here that Mr Tennstedt becomes most desperately pessimistic, most pessimistically desperate. The performance is certainly not one to quieten the mind. It is rather, deeply distressing in its self-directed fury, its incitement of every idea to be violently disruptive in a context of strong symphonic compulsion. But the scherzo is just as nasty with its shrill piping and its grotesque bass sounds out of Father's music in *Siegfried*.

Both recordings enjoy magnificent playing, from the London Philharmonic Orchestra for Mr Tennstedt and from the Chicago Symphony for Sir Georg, who also has the benefit of Helga Darnesch as soloist. Her Nietzsche song, a subjective expression voiced with objective calm and authority but also with intense close interest, gives the performance its keynote.

Paul Griffiths

Four hands make bright work

Stravinsky: Petrushka/Concerto for two pianos Labèque Sisters, Philips 410 301 1, Cassette 410 301 4

Liszt: Schubert songs transcribed by Jorge Bolet, Decca SXDL 7559, Cassette KSXDC 7559

Schubert: B flat Sonata D960/Impromptu Clifford Curzon, Decca JB 140, Cassette KJBC 140

Stravinsky's ballet *Petrushka* was originally a concert piece for piano and orchestra, and last year Peter Donohoe on EMI showed us how its tonal and dramatic clashes, the wavering between illusion and reality, could be concentrated brilliantly in the piano reduction. Rubinstein made for Anna Rubinstein in 1921. Now come the Labèque Sisters, elevating the two-piano version, originally conceived only for rehearsal or amateur use, into not only an exciting showpiece, but a startlingly illuminating recreation. Their two-piano concerto, too, is a masterpiece of intellectual rigour and pianistic panache.

When Liszt transcribed and recreated the work of others, he celebrated the composer concerned and the piano itself - for him both *mikrokosmos* and *makrokosmos*. Jorge Bolet, in his second Liszt volume, begins to fill a gaping void in the catalogue by presenting a selection of Schubert song transcriptions which, like the Wagner, still await performances to equal in imagination,

authority and flair those which have now been deleted.

Even if it leads him to overpoint some of Liszt's harmonic and figural glosses at times, it is Bolet's understanding and sheer joy in both creator and recreator here that rings out of the groove.

Schubert's own keyboard lyricism is found by Clifford Curzon in three Impromptus, although the two from Op 90

A master in the art of taking liberties

Pogorelich's Baroque performance of the Chopin Concerto No 2 just a year ago did not meet with universal approval. His recording echoes the liberties then taken, with, in the initial *maestoso*, considerable deviations from the basic pulse. Yet there is a high yield of poetry from the so-called decorative passage work, and in fact throughout every detail is vividly experienced, each note played with an exactly graded precision.

This is all matched by

Chopin: Piano Concerto No 2 Ivo Pogorelich/Chicago Symphony Orchestra/Claudio Abbado, DG 410 507-1

Mendelssohn: Piano Concertos Nos 1 and 2 Andreas Schiff/Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra/Charles Dutoit, Decca SXDL 7823

Abbado's broad, spacious accompaniment which answers the visionary qualities of the solo playing, and if this reading is not quite so daring and spontaneous as the Baroque

one it still makes us think about the music anew. Of the same vintage are Mendelssohn's concertos - his No 1 appearing in 1931, a year after Chopin's No 2. Yet they are more respectfully symphonic.

Andreas Schiff's solo contributions have extreme lightness and clarity, sometimes to excess in relation to the large mass of sound Dutoit gets from the Bavarian State SO. The piano playing is brilliant.

Max Harrison

Classical records of the month



Benjamin Britten: Liturgy confronts poetry in War Requiem

Excelling the classic

Michel Plasseon and his forces from Toulouse have produced for EMI a steady flow of Offenbach operettas characterized by their feel for true French style in the handling of both words and music. This month they have turned their attention to slightly sterner stuff - although Massenet detractors might question the adjective - in the shape of *Manon*.

Once again Plasseon shows that he knows exactly what he is about, whether it be the shimmering accompaniment to Des Grieux's Dream Song or the classical pastiche of the *Cours à la Reine* scene. This is French opera sung and played idiomatically, something rarely heard nowadays in the theatre; it was certainly not evident in the last *Manon* on record, also from EMI, under Julius Rudel, which made a mercifully swift exit from the catalogue.

For this new version EMI have assembled a cast which equals, and in some instances exceeds, the classic recording by Montoux. Ileana Cotrubas is an inspired choice for the title role: her French vowels coarsen occasionally and the lower register is not always as firm as it should be, but none of our other leading sopranos have the girlish timbre and flirtatiousness she brings to the part.

Massenet: Manon Cotrubas/Kraus/Quilico/Van Dam, Toulouse Capitole Orch./Plasseon, EMI SLS 1731413 (3 records), Cassette, TC - SLS 1731415

Verdi: Ernani Freni/Domingo/Bruson/Ghiaurov, La Scala Orch./Mut EMI 1435843 (3 records), Cassette, TC - SLS 1435845

Nor is it possible to fault Alfredo Kraus, always a complete Massenet stylist, as Des Grieux. Time was when Kraus used to sound about half his true age; here he sounds about a third of it. And there are no complaints about the supporting cast led by Gino Quilico (Lescart) and Jose Van Dam (Le Comte des Grieux). EMI have an ugly box, some badly printed photographs and on tape the pauses between acts are too short, but otherwise this is an outstanding set.

Verdi's *Ernani* is no better represented in the catalogue than *Manon*. The most remarkable element about this month's new recording (EMI again) is that it sounds as good as it does. It was taken live, with I suspect a little studio back-up, from the Scala production of exactly a year ago. The opening night, as reported in this page at the time, was a shambles mainly because of perverse production

by Luca Ronconi. That fortunately is out of sight but not out of earshot and a great deal of tramping about on stage disfigures the recording.

Nevertheless, the cast is a starry one. Domingo is in flowing voice in the title role and as refined as Bergonzi on the rival RCA set; Freni, who had an unhappy first night, was clearly in better form once the premiere was over; Bruson still has trouble with "Vieni meco" but dominates the whole of Act III; Ghiaurov remains a dry and dull Silva. The greatest plus is Must himself, always reflecting the energy of this too rarely heard score. "An opera of class and confrontation", Julian Budden remarks rightly in his libretto note.

The first three complete operas on Compact Disc have just come out on DG: *Alba* (410 093-2), *Carmen* (410 088-2) and *Falstaff* (410 503-2). *Nabucco*, conducted by Sinopoli, is expected any day. For pure sound quality Karajan's *Carmen* takes the palm; for value Giulini's *Falstaff* gets the prize for being contained on two discs rather than three, an important factor with sets costing £20 and upwards. But all three are strongly recommended.

John Higgins

Passion as the palace tumbles

It is good to have, at last, a complete recording of Gluck's *Armide* - incredible that it should have eluded the record catalogue for so long - and it is especially welcome that this new version should preserve the enterprising stage performances given at the 1982 Spitalfields Festival (whose Friends have sponsored the recording).

This is a rich and magnificent score, unlike the earlier operas Gluck wrote for Paris because it represents a closer marriage of old and new forms. In place of the terse structure of the *Phigéennes*, here is the old five-act formula of Rameau and Lully, enlivened with dance and making much use of spectacle.

Armide needs a sensational, committed heroine. Janet Baker recorded the final scene memorably some years ago, but she could scarcely manage it today. Felicity Palmer, singing as well as I have ever heard her, gives an extraordinarily forceful account of the part, edgy and biting in the fierce moments, coolly, smoothly lyrical in the serene arias. In sheer beauty of sound she is bettered only by Anthony Rolfe Johnson as Renaud.

Anthony Rolfe Johnson and Raimund Herincx, wavers

Gluck: Armide Felicity Palmer, Anthony Rolfe Johnson, Raimund Herincx, Linda Fennell, Sally Burgess, Marie Storch/Richard Hickox/Singara/City of London Sinfonia/Richard Hickox, EMI SLS 1077513 (3 records)

Mozart: Concerto in G major Op 8 Constanza Micaela, Vienna/Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Teldec Das Alte Werk 6.35603 (3 records)

Mozart: Symphonies Nos 25 & 40 Constanza Micaela, Vienna/Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Teldec 6.42935 AZ

slightly as Hidraot, though the splendid duet with Armide, "Démone, obéissez-vous" goes well.

Orchestra and chorus are smoothly efficient, and Richard Hickox's direction sustains a high level of shapeliness, but I often felt the need for sharper characterization: as Armide's palace tumbles about her in the great final scene, Palmer is impassioned but the accompaniment is merely strenuous.

What, I wonder, would Nikolaus Harnoncourt make of Gluck's marvellous orchestral writing there? The latest batch of releases from this alarmingly prolific figure celebrates 20

years in the recording studio; as ever, each bears his highly personal stamp and they are inexhaustibly stimulating. The quirks of his complete Handel Op 6 have received a rough ride from some colleagues; I found this set absolutely exhilarating, more thrilling sound on record than the boppie-like Allegro from Op 6 No 5, with its thundering accents and rising crescendo, or a more unrelenting one than the grinding Musette from Op 6 No 6. Some movements may be bolted (the opening of Op 6 No 11), and some crudified, but at all times rhythms are sharply judged and the phrasing carefully thought-out.

This feeling of every gesture having been rethought as a rhetorical device persists in Harnoncourt's Mozart with the modern-instrument Concerto-bow. It sounds especially fine in Teldec's direct metal mastering pressings.

The "little" G minor Symphony No 25 cannot quite bear the interpretative weight he brings to it, but the "great" G minor, No 40, emerges as rivetingly unusual.

Nicholas Kenyon

Publishing

Food for thought

One of the sporadic things about best-seller lists is that you have usually heard of the authors or their books. Take, for a particular reason, the *Sunday Times* list for March 15 to 21, 1981. Robert Kee, James Herriot, Stewart Granger, Arthur C. Clarke, Clive James and David Attenborough occupy places 2 to 7. The publisher of the top seller of the week is, as intriguing as the author, the firm is Chiltern House, whose principal is Richard Binns. The book in question, *French Leave*, an informal guide to the hotels and restaurants of France, sold 20,000 copies.

Mr Binns was learning fast. The next edition of *French Leave*, the second book he published, sold 20,000 to Book Club Associates and 10,000 to the US. The subsequent book, *France à la Carte*, has sold 73,000 including trade paperback, book club and US editions. With his fourth publication, *Hidden France*, Mr Binns decided that, to a degree, both the country and the book should remain that way. "During 1983 sales will be restricted to a total of 22,500 copies". Earlier this month he published his fifth book, the 336 page third edition of *French Leave*, crammed with information and opinion.

In 1980 Mr Binns was aged 43. He had had a successful career as an accountant, management consultant and in computers. He had worked for Burroughs and helped, ironically, to computerize a number of publishers including Octopus and Mitchell Beazley. He offered the manuscript of the first *French Leave* to Octopus in March 1980, and they still have not - as is often the way - responded.

By now you have guessed that Richard Binns is the author of the books he has published. He next approached Mitchell Beazley, who were enthusiastic. Mr Binns, of course, was delighted, especially as American Express (which, later, was to buy Mitchell Beazley, and then sell them) had undertaken to purchase 3,000 copies if a publisher were found.

Mitchell Beazley offered Mr Binns a royalty of 2½ per cent on net sales in effect just over 1 per cent of the retail price, £3.95. He told them to forget it. Richard Binns believes that writers should be remunerated at the rate of the number of hours they put in on the job. "Even if 50,000 copies were sold, £2,400 would have been paid. Research alone came to more than double that. "It was when I realized I would earn more as their tea-lady that my

temper broke." The Binns mortgaged their house in Amersham, and he learned to become a publisher.

Richard Binns is no crackpot nor, it has to be said, an exceptional writer. It is less, even, that he has found a real gap in the marketplace - there are many books on holidaying in France - than that he has thoroughly researched his subject and made certain that his attractive publications are available at the appropriate points of sale. He is primarily a businessman who understands correctly that he is four times better off bringing out his own books efficiently than consigning them to the arbitrariness of a respected imprint.

Mr Binns has permitted me access to his costs for the new edition of *French Leave*, which is something Penguin or Collins or Heinemann might be reluctant to do. The production expenses, without overheads, are £62,000, broken up thus: design, editing and rights: £1,200; typesetting: £4,500; maps: £2,000; printing (in England too, and handsome: Butler & Tanner, Frome): £28,000. Reading the book for libel, printing advertising leaflets and buying space in catalogues came to £5,600. Research cost £10,000, travellers' and other sales expenses £8,000, distribution £2,700.

A total of 27,500 copies have been printed of the United Kingdom edition, and 7,500 for the US. At a retail price of £3.95, the possible return to the publisher is £104,000. A profit of £42,000 might be shown by the end of 1985.

Clearly not all authors have either the inclination or business sense to be their own publishers, which is as well for those publishers who don't have the ability or impulse to be their own authors. Myself, I find Mr Binns' style somewhat lacking in stringency, but his books are properly displayed in bookshops and his sales figures indicate that there is a real need for them. Should our leading publishers not be a little concerned about this success? I was misinformed in stating that Desmond Clarke of the Book Marketing Council unilaterally removed the names of three novelists from the Best of British Authors promotion. At least one of the selectors, John Hyams of W H Smith, insists that the publishing list was as originally chosen. Mr Clarke also points out that he will continue to direct the Best of British Authors campaign after his move to Faber & Faber. My apologies Mr Clarke.

E. J. Craddock

Concerts

LBS/Steinitz Festival Hall

Only a fool or a fanatic, you might think, would listen to six Bach cantatas in succession. Yet hundreds do it annually, and did so again when Paul Steinitz brought the complete Christmas Oratorio to the Festival Hall on Saturday.

Bach performed six works on different days between Christmas and Epiphany 1724-5; they undoubtedly hang together, but the whole three-hour sequence can be daunting. I had not noticed before this performance how Bach jettisons the da capo aria form in the later cantatas so as to increase the pace and tautness, culminating in the two final richly scored arias in the sixth cantata.

The London Bach Society's performances can be relied upon to present Bach's music complete and uncluttered with affection: the light unfussy singing of the choir is refreshing; the clear articulation was only occasionally too dry for the acoustic.

It was wise of Dr Steinitz, for reasons of both security and balance, to choose an orchestra of modern instruments; at the root of the playing was an excellent agile continuo group which gave the bass lines a gentle, dance-like touch. It was nice to hear that Simon Standage can still vibrate with the best of them in his solos, but

many other players seemed less secure. Dr Steinitz's vivid conducting occasionally seemed to cause them problems in discerning the speed of movements, and a few sections veered uneasily in the opening bars before settling down.

The soloists were Patricia Kwella, who started tensely but relaxed into a beautiful bell-like clarity by the end; Paul Esswood, an imperious and stylishly controlled counter-tenor; Wynford Evans, whose tenor too often took refuge in sotto voce singing; Richard Morton, a more operatic Evangelist than when I last heard him; and Brian Cook, the very model of a modern oratorio soloist.

Nicholas Kenyon

Dreamtiger

Wigmore Hall

Hors d'oeuvres have their place in a well regulated meal, but it is not a good thing to let them take over almost the entire menu. Last night's concert by the Dreamtiger Ensemble, apparently started with the idea of putting Messiaen's Preludes last. These operate on what the programme referred to as "an attenuated time scale", which is an ultra polite way of saying that they are very long.

It was decided to contrast this with a large collection of very short items and, in an attempt

Theatre The last resort

The Holiday Liverpool Playhouse

Let's take the easy part first. Jim Morris's play, set on a Welsh hillside, confronts four Wallasey girls seeking peace for some O level cramming with four Birkenhead lads in a tent who are up to something and wish them gone. The sort of ribald backchat that follows at great lengths is the only predictable thing about the evening. It is not improved by a trifle of endlessly repeating words and phrases, inverted and varied, very Pinterish but done to death and surely helish to memorize.

There is plenty of character comedy at an obvious level: poor little Danny (David Edge) with his bedsores and his Teddy Bear, Maggie the bespectacled klutz (Angela Curran), randy Knobbo (Ian Davies) closing in on breezy, bossy Debbie (Judy Holt) during her aerobics. Only into the second act does animosity emerge.

A line of slates down the middle of the stage is not only

territorial demarcation, but a symbolic "great divide", with the girls studying so as not to "end up on the dole like you". The boys are on a quarry-robbing expedition; that is their "work", the only kind they will get. Their ensuing resort to violence, the girls' hopes of careers in the police force or a social security office, even Lucy (Stella Gonet) rolling up *The Guardian* to use as a weapon while she orates about order and propriety: all these have a significance obvious enough. But mixed in with them, the back-chat, the poetic imagery, and the dull inconsequential exchanges constantly recur, all with increasing intensity as the violence intensifies.

This astrophysical finale sends you out far too dazed to know whether the show comes together or not. Pip Broughton's production may be partly responsible for that, but is very impressive in its control of pace, building of tension, and sensitivity to the rhythms of a bizarrely distinctive style.

Anthony Masters

Television

Comrades in laughter

Struggle (Channel 4) was interesting principally for offering further proof that political radicalism is now associated in the public mind with unorthodox sexuality - "Gays Against Cruise" and "Transvestites Against the Cuts" were two of the banners unfurled in last night's comedy on the theme of "sexism" (in fact, most homosexuals and transvestites are extremely conservative people). Peter Jenkins's series concerns a left-wing group who have taken control of a London borough, and are now fighting against what the cast-list classifies as "The World".

It seems that the radical left can now safely be considered as figures of fun - they themselves might protest as the "establishment" prejudice embodied in

such an approach, although conservatives might also complain that dangerous elements in our society are being rendered coey and even respectable in the process.

The last of Clive James on Television (LWT) offered a cursory examination of the relationship between programmes and advertisements: since the people who work in the television and advertising industries share many of the same attitudes, their two products are in fact getting closer all the time.

Mr James's series has been intermittently funny, although he never seemed to realize that his audience only watched it because they were genuinely interested in, and entertained by, the American and Japanese

"clips" about which he was so disparaging.

"There's nothing new about me," was one of the first lines in Cannon & Ball (LWT), and indeed there isn't. The diminutive figure of Bobby Ball, spirited but anxious, perpetually cheerful and yet sometimes distracted to the point of agony, comes straight out of music hall.

He embodies Max Beerbohm's description of Dan Leno: "That air of wild determination, squirming in every limb with some deep grievance that must be quipped... that poor little battered personage". There is something deeply reassuring about the fact that, English, comedy has hardly changed.

Peter Ackroyd

Royal Opera House

Arts Council

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SPECTRUM

One for the money, two for the show

Twenty years ago, they wouldn't let their daughters marry a Rolling Stone. Liz Jobey talks to the corporate marketing men who see pop music following sport as a suitable vehicle for 'image enhancement'

Tomorrow night at the Apollo Theatre, Manchester, the pop group Duran Duran, currently idolized by tens of thousands of British teenagers and by millions more around the world, begin a tour of Britain which will undoubtedly have the tabloid newspapers reaching for comparisons with the heyday of the Beatles.

In at least one respect the intervening 20 years have made a significant difference: Duran Duran's appearances are being "exclusively sponsored" by Sony, the Japanese electronics firm, which is using the opportunity to publicize its line of blank-tape cassettes.

Even the wildest dreams of such adventurous pop impresarios as the Beatles' Brian Epstein or Elvis Presley's "Colonel" Tom Parker could scarcely have encompassed the vision of rock and roll, long viewed (not least by itself) as an ill-behaved bastard child, transformed into a marketing tool of the corporate world outside show business.

That, however, is what has occurred. Pop music in the 1980s is perceived as safe and predictable enough to carry the images of a variety of products, from jeans to cosmetics, into hearts and homes. Nowadays none other than the Rolling Stones, whose anti-establishment posture once made them repellent even to the businessmen of their own world, are part of the marketing game.

This "domestication" has been accompanied by some misgivings within the pop world. "It's a very uneasy state of affairs," says Pete Townshend, leader of The Who, whose last US tour was sponsored by Schlitz beer. "The fans don't like it. It makes them suspicious. And once a group's integrity goes, that's it."

Diminishing response to television advertising at the younger end of the market and a constant need to update their image are cited by companies wooing pop groups and their managers. For their part, the groups are generally grateful for cash which offsets the spiralling costs of taking a show on the road.

In return for a sum believed to be in the region of £40,000, Sony are being granted the use of a specially-designed logo linking them with Duran Duran and, more vitally, the legend "Sony Tape presents..." on all publicity material, tickets, programmes and posters.

In addition to the fee, they are spending money on a national advertising campaign centred on the tour. They are running competitions in the national and regional press, in popular



The fine line between sponsorship and endorsement: David Bowie, Mick Jagger and Duran Duran's Simon Le Bon

teenage magazines and through 2,500 retailers around the country. The formula is standard: answer questions on your favourite group and win a trip to see them perform in the United States.

The concert halls throughout the tour will be "dressed" in Sony's promotional banners and, before each show, a "girl merchandizing force" will be giving away a free Sony blank cassette to each fan who buys a programme - a gift which might appease those fans who, conscious of pop music's anti-commercial stance, accuse Duran Duran of "selling out".

Across the foyer from the Sony stand will be EMI, Duran Duran's record company, promoting - as is usual at pop concerts - the group's new LP, also available on pre-recorded cassette. As far as EMI is concerned, Sony's presence represents the blatant intrusion of what many record business executives regard as the potential agent of their destruction: home taping on blank cassettes.

It is not the first time that record companies have had cause to accuse their groups of, in effect, conspiring to bite the hand that feeds them. Last year the Rolling Stones were sponsored in Germany by TDK cassettes, while another British group, Japan, accepted sponsorship from Maxel, also a blank-tape manufacturer.

The British Phonographic Institute (BPI) is currently lobbying Parliament to change the 1956 Copyright Act, pressing principally for the imposition of a levy on blank tape to make up some of the £300 million which industry spokesmen claim is lost each

year in record sales through home taping. "We are losing money all the time," says Maurice Oberstein, chairman of the BPI.

A Sony spokesman turned the argument around. "By supporting tours and making concerts possible," he said, "we are helping to put money back into the record business." Duran Duran's management points out that it was the withdrawal of financial support by the record companies, which began to taper off when the recession first bit in the late 1970s, that made the acceptance of sponsorship a general necessity.

Music to sell jeans by

Since 1976 the cost of taking a top group has doubled but the record companies, who during the industry's fat years subsidized the outlay (later to recoup it in royalties from record sales), have ceased to contribute their share. Instead they are putting promotional money into three-minute videos, reaching a wider audience through such television shows as *Top of the Pops*. Through clenched teeth, EMI admit that they forfeited any right to object to Sony's involvement when they chose not to subsidize the tour themselves.

For an act of the calibre of the Rolling Stones or Barry Manilow, the cost of staging a single evening at Wembley Arena or Blenheim can run up to £500,000 - including sound equipment, lighting rigs, rental of the

venue, technicians' wages, articulated trucks, limousines, hotel bills, air fares, catering, publicity, insurance and the promoter's commission.

Whether or not the sponsor receives value for money depends on the care with which he negotiates his agreement. In the case of Sony and Duran Duran, the marriage was made by a third party - West Nally Music, the latest branch of an international consultancy which plans to do for music sponsorship what has already done in bringing "outside money" into sport by organizing, among other projects, the rental of advertising hoardings at football grounds, the use of the giant "Diamondvision" television screen at major events and the sponsorship of Test matches in England by the Cornhill insurance company.

Since 1980, when Levi Jeans backed a week of concerts at the Rainbow Theatre in North London to help launch a new line of "rainbow-striped" clothes, West Nally Music has acted as consultants to Levi's investment in British tours by Roxy Music in 1981 and by David Bowie earlier this year. For the Rolling Stones' world tour last year, the company organized sponsors in individual territories: TDK cassettes in Germany, Piaggio motor-scooters in Italy and Jovan cosmetics (who spent a million dollars) in the US.

This kind of mediation is overcoming the mutual suspicion with which marketing executives and their counterparts in the music business have regarded each other. In the past their methods - particularly in matters of timing - have often proved

incompatible. A tour promoter, for example, working on behalf of a group's management, is likely to discover a budget deficit as little as six weeks before the opening night - far too late for an international company to carry out market research and plan an appropriate campaign.

"At the moment firms are afraid to put a worthwhile amount of money into sponsorship," says Harvey Goldsmith, a major British promoter who handles tours by the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan and other first-division artists. "They are afraid of something going wrong which might damage the image of their product. So they put in £10,000 and expect it to do

Tailored to fit the youth market

a year's marketing. Until it is properly organized, most sponsors are going to think they've wasted their money."

At the moment, British music managers draw a clear dividing line between sponsorship of tours, which ends with the last performance, and personal endorsement of a product, the equivalent in music to John McEnroe's advertising of Bic razors or Henry Cooper and Barry Sheene dousing themselves in Brut.

"There's a limit to how far you can go," says Sam Alder, of EG Management, who accepted sponsorship from Levi's for Roxy Music in 1981. "When Levi's wanted to put the group in jeans for the official tour poster, we refused. David Bowie wore a pair of Levi's for his tour poster this year, though."

Direct conflicts can occur, as happened when the Who were criticized for accepting sponsorship from a brewer shortly after Pete Townshend had publicly admitted to his struggle against a serious drink problem.

"I was outvoted," Townshend says. "The money paid for a chartered plane instead of taking commercial flights. It was an eight-week tour and I can't say I objected to being comfortable. I could even persuade myself that it enabled us to give a better performance. The biggest injustice in sponsorship is that the groups who need it don't get it. The Rolling Stones or David Bowie don't really need the money. It's the young up-and-coming bands who need the support."

West Nally Music's Des Mainwaring sees the other side. "Music is the obvious vehicle through which you can reach young people," he says. "It's as simple as that. Music sponsorship is a vastly superior medium to television advertising. A 30-second commercial slot can cost you £50,000, it's in direct competition to those next to it and the kids have the remote-control button ready to switch stations."

"At a concert you might not have so many viewers, but what you will have is several thousand teenagers inside a venue for three or four hours, during which time a company can put over its product message."

Further major sponsorships and endorsements are under negotiation. "This is just the tip of the iceberg," Mainwaring enthuses. "Almost any product can be tailored to fit the youth market."

moreover...
Miles Kingston

Now, spot the voice

Only for readers of Moreover
A great new Christmas Contest!

If you have to do is study the following recorded telephone messages and the list of well-known people, then decide which personality is most likely to have recorded which message.

First of all, here are the recorded messages.

1. "... is not here at the moment, but as soon as he gets home from Brussels or Belfast he will be glad to deal with your complaint or death threat. Let me say straightaway that whatever you are ringing up to say, I saw this coming many months ago. I have said so many times and I lay the entire blame at the feet of Jim Prior, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. He should resign immediately and be replaced by someone who can take action to safeguard the law-abiding citizens of this province. In a moment you will hear a tone, after which you will be able to hear me going on speaking..."

2. "... copies of my diaries, which are on sale at the National Theatre and other good bookshops. I am unfortunately out doing extra rehearsals at the moment, but if you wish to buy tickets for *Jean Seberg*, which are still available for some performances, simply leave your credit card number together with full details. If you have not rung up about tickets for *Jean Seberg*, may I urge you to come along anyway to this magnificent..."

3. "Hill Not at home just now, I'm afraid, but if you have an invasion requirement of top priority, just leave the name of the island or country you want invaded, together with a good sounding reason, and we'll be right back to you. This recording is sponsored by the military industries of America. God bless you, my fellow Americans and illegal immigrants. Thank you."

4. "... is no longer at this Tripoli number. Please leave your name and address and we will try to contact you."

5. "One of the pleasures of life, I think, is recording a telephone message for one's friends to enjoy, an art which has almost been lost today if indeed it was ever found, bearing in mind the recent nature of its invention and the crippling inadequacy of human response to this heaven-sent opportunity to indulge the glory of the English language. I myself will return shortly to hear your message: meanwhile, I am seated at the Café des Feuilletistes, about to sample an exquisite dish of langoustines with asparagus-flavoured mayonnaise accompanied by a crisp bottle of Chateau Wagner, which reminds me overpoweringly of a remark by Stendhal to the effect that..." This message has been severely edited.

6. "... is here at the moment, but is far too busy to come to the phone. Please contact Mr John Biffen on the following number..."

7. "Hello, amigos! Yes, it is true, I, your old friend, am to be court-martialled here in Argentina for my conduct in the last war. More about that later. But until I get back, let me ask this question: is Mrs Thatcher to be court-martialled for her part in the Grenada invasion? And if not, why not? Hasta la vista."

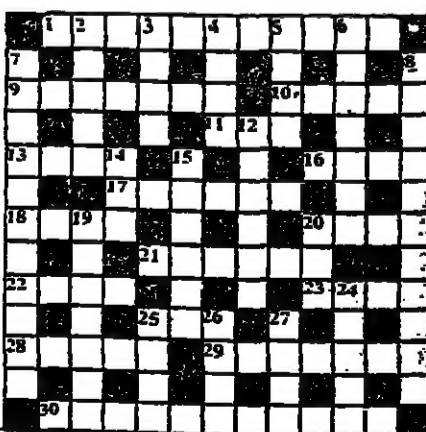
8. "... is not ill, is not dying, is not round the twist, is merely having a short cold. Please do not ring this Moscow number again. Leave your name and address if you dare."

And now the names which you must sort out with the right message.

Mr Bruce Kent, Larry Adler, Bobby Robson, the late Harold Holt, John McEnroe, Ronnie Scott, Sir Roy Strong and the Pope.

Have fun.

CONCISE CROSSWORD (No 215)



- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ACROSS | DOWN |
| 1 Muse of dance (11) | 2 Upright position (5) |
| 9 Mournful poet (7) | 3 Ballet squat (4) |
| 10 Money (5) | 4 Air transport body (11,1,1,1) |
| 11 Append (3) | 5 Largo tempo (4) |
| 13 Curse (4) | 6 Hermit (7) |
| 16 Dialect "r" (4) | 7 Noteworthy items (11) |
| 17 Ideal state (6) | 8 Robbery (11) |
| 18 Wield (4) | 9 Japanese magnate (6) |
| 20 Obscene (4) | 10 Derivative exclamation (3) |
| 21 Trial (6) | 11 Prevailing trend (7) |
| 22 Wading bird (4) | 12 Lower limb (3) |
| 23 Walking manner (4) | 13 Concur (5) |
| 25 Duck (3) | 14 Record (4) |
| 26 Iraq native (5) | 15 Mischief spirit (4) |
| 28 Experience (7) | 16 Brink (4) |
| 30 Law maintainer (11) | |

Solution to Saturday's prize concise will appear in Saturday. Recommended dictionary is the New Collins Concise

At 72, Ionesco greets the world's 'horrible farce' with a snigger

Why did Eugene Ionesco, at the age of 72, agree to frolic around the world - Paris, New York, London - as an actor in a Bloomsbury literary prank, *Freshwater*, by Virginia Woolf, which hardly merited the half-dozen performances it has received in the past 60 years?

"For no reason", Ionesco replied.

"It is a play which belongs to that group of plays which are pointless. I believe there is nothing more important than the pointless. We have been killed, assassinated by

committed theatre. Brechtian theatre. But where do rich and poor go for amusement? Not to a film or a play with ideas. They all go to a football match which is considerably pointless.

"Plays should not be ideological", Ionesco said, giving a rebuking emphasis to each word. "I have tried to eliminate any ulterior motive from my work. I have written my own little Macbeth and it ends with the quotation: 'A tale told by an idiot...signifying

nothing'. That is my guide."

If the words were characteristic of the puckish, gnome-like figure who in the 1960s was the acknowledged ring master of the Left Bank Theatre of the Absurd, and whose mischievous reflections on colleagues and critics kept intellectual Paris abubbling, Eugene Ionesco has undergone a personal change. The pessimism which was always discernible behind the playfulness is now raw. As we sat talking in the deserted lobby of a

Sloane Square hotel it became apparent that anguish and discouragement were only kept in check by the visible efforts of will of a man who is now also physically frail.

In *Freshwater* Ionesco plays a Santa Claus-bearded Lord Tennyson, with Nathalie Serrault, aged 82, and progenitor of the "new novel" playing a butler, and Alain Robbe-Grillet, of *Marienthal* notoriety, as Virginia Woolf's uncle. In the mid-1960s Ionesco condemned the "new novelists" for their "refusal to construct a world": now he is performing with them on stage. He appeared uneasy at this reminder of old literary antagonisms: "One acts for amusement", he replied gently, "with people one likes. People with the same preoccupations - the same rictus."

Twenty years ago his *Airborne Pedestrian* flew over the world and looking down saw cruelty, persecution and fear of war. Could it look any better now? "What he would see is much worse. The play was prophetic. It was about people who amuse themselves, convinced that the danger is not close to them. Suddenly catastrophe arrives."

About this point a curious change came over the deserted hotel lobby. Corralled by a swirl of seamless Muzak, a stream of characters began to assemble as if for a performance of *The Bald Prima Donna* (which is set in London). They stood in small groups ignoring each other, blurring out disjointed statements with the absurd eagerness of Ionesco's Smith family discommunicating with each other.

Just behind our divan a fierce man standing over a compliant lady made determined, decisive gestures, but neither of them went anywhere. By the reception desk a beautiful young woman, watched by two cardboard admirers, spoke into a telephone and registered extravagant delight and astonishment in response to a voice no one could hear. Three ladies sat in a row babbling without looking at each other. And then, right on cue, a prosperous young woman entered with a tiny baby. The women in unison, sprang up joyfully. The baby parted its tool-like gums and gave a rancorous shriek.

Ionesco had tilted his head back against the top of the divan in weariness; his crumpled hot face



Ionesco as Lord Tennyson in a scene from *Freshwater*

and liquid eyes registered regret and discontent.

"Happiness is mediocre," he commented. "When people search for happiness what they are searching for is comfort. Look at this comfortable hotel, that beautiful image of mother and child. Here is comfort, happiness. Then the bomb falls and all is effaced. We must search for something more indestructible than happiness. We must attempt to achieve contemplation."

"Politics today," he went on, joining his hands piously and articulating with difficulty, "instead of being a science for organizing harmony in the world, has become a senseless battle of domination for domination's sake. Politicians lack the capacity for contemplation."

They act; they think what they do is important, but it is destructive.

"What is this catastrophe we are heading for? Neither politicians nor philosophers, Marxist or non-Marxist, can explain it. I think only metaphysics can do that. I think the world is very badly made. I believe it must have been created by demons without God's knowledge. Perhaps the world was made as a farce, a horrible, a painful farce, but a farce and the only attitude we can have to misfortune is to laugh. Indeed to snigger."

The May revolt of 1968 literally swept up under Ionesco's window on the Boulevard Montparnasse. But he does not think revolutions achieve anything.

"There was an element of play acting about May '68 which was interesting," he said. "But what happened to all those destructors, those announcers of a new world? They have all become clerks. For 200 years revolutions have taken place in the name of liberty and fraternity. But what have they achieved? Just another kind of exploitation of man. They say art is useless, but it's really revolutions which are useless."

In 1970 this Romanian-born playwright was received into Cardinal Richelieu's Académie Française, and became one of the 40 "Immortals" of France. He had a curious career. Until the age of 50 he was an obscure Left-Bank playwright; then he began to skip up the Establishment ladder. His work was accepted by the Théâtre de France; embalméd five years later in the Comédie Française, and by the time he was 60 he was closed with all who bore arms, pens or bunsen burners at what is considered the highest level of French achievement.

Considering all this misfortune, I asked him, has it done you any good to be immortal? "It serves no purpose," he agreed. "I joined so that I could have the company of other solitary men once a week. *The Bald Prima Donna* is still playing in the little 80-seater Huchette Theatre in Paris where it first opened in the mid-1950s. That makes more than quarter of a century of plucky if hopeless nose-thumbing at misfortune and mankind."

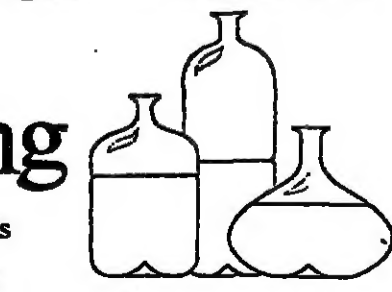
Peter Lennon

VENINI

The Genius of Venice in the art of Glass making

Venini, since its foundation in 1921, is the recognised world master for its unique range of 'objets d'art', acclaimed by experts and collectors. A range of selected pieces have been produced to be on sale at the Royal Academy of Arts during the exhibition of The Genius of Venice.

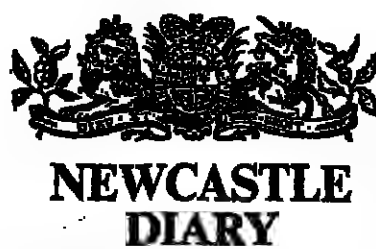
The entire collection is available at Class International, the British home of Venini: the genius of glass.



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Tyne waits for no man

"The situation of (Newcastle) is exceeding unpleasant and the buildings very close and old, which, with the smoke of the coals, makes it not the pleasant place in the world to live; but it is made amends abundantly by the goodness of the river, which... makes it a place of very great business." Daniel Defoe, 1726. Today, Defoe would see the reverse: an unprosperous, idle river, some defunct bridges — one carrying the Newcastle Metro, surely the cheapest, quickest and cleanest underground in Britain — and fine quayside buildings, crying out for use.

Coming up the hill, he would note Elizabethan half-timbered houses opposite inevitably ghastly office blocks, and then the city blossoming into a late eighteenth century neoclassical extravaganza — gracious, spacious, inviting. One street over, the thunderous urban motorway; further up, the superb Victorian covered market; further still, the horrifying Eldon Square indoor shopping complex. One revels and cringes in turn.

Pigs in porcelain
Industry spends a lot of time meaning that universities are all head in the clouds, universities that industry is all clouds in the head. But sialon (trade name Syalon), the new, incredibly tough porcelain, was developed jointly by the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and Lucas Industries. Better than stainless carbide as a cutting tool, it also bids fair to revolutionize engines, enabling them to run far hotter and so more efficiently. The name caught my attention. "Porcelain" derives from Latin *porcus*, "pig" (by a route involving, interestingly, the female privates); *sialon* means "pig" in ancient Greek. Clever crystallographers, clever me, but wrong again. *Silicon* — aluminium — oxygen — (hydrogen) are the material's constituents.

Katie's corner
Catherine Cookson has just given a magnificent £20,000 to the extension fund of the university's Elton Gallery, part of which will house Fred Uhlman's recent gift of remarkable African sculpture. Let us hope Miss Cookson is rewarded by a London production of her *Katie Mulholland*. Ken Hill's dramatization of this romantic derring-do for Tyne and Wear's Playhouse was a staggering success, sold out long before its six-week run. If Daisy can pull it off, why not Katie?

BARRY FANTONI

Stuck in
The latest volume from Newcastle's Society of Antiquaries presents the evidence for a new method of locating ancient church foundations — dowsing. No excavation is needed: it is cheap, quick and effortless. But does it work? The answer seems to be a guarded yes. Where subsequent digging has been possible, the dowsers' predictions have been largely vindicated. Thirty buildings have been surveyed.

Trunk call
One of Newcastle's unsung heroes must be Daedalus, the ingenious columnist of *New Scientist* who lives in a Victorian place filled with contraptions overlooking the Town Moor. It is Daedalus who, in his capacity as adviser to a popular TV science programme, persuaded otherwise respectable citizens, on a given signal, to rush out of their homes holding a piece of lavatory paper in order to register rainfall at one point in time all over Britain, a unique research exercise made possible only through the mass media.

In *The Inventions of Daedalus* (W. H. Freeman), you can now muse on his solutions to the world's problems with continuous lengths of pre-cooked elephant-trunk pie, multi-coloured, tabby sheep, large columns of golden syrup generating water in the desert, socks which ratchet their way up your legs, and similar panaceas.

Culture shock
Newcastle's rates may be astronomical, but the extensive and excellent cultural delights on offer at absurd prices compensate (complete RSC season £12.50; last week's pre-cooked elephant-trunk pie, multi-coloured, tabby sheep, large columns of golden syrup generating water in the desert, socks which ratchet their way up your legs, and similar panaceas).

Peter Jones

Time to sell off the NHS

by David Hart

If the Government wants to improve health care, it should apply its free market ideas not just to the industries it finds itself owning, but to the services it feels obliged to offer.

During and since the election the Government has been forced on to the defensive on the health issue, which may well come to be seen as the litmus test of its determination to stick to the philosophy that got it elected, twice.

Before health care can be put on to a sensible footing, national habits of wrong-thinking that have endured for 30 years have to be broken.

First, there has to be an informed national debate. A cloud of one-sided information on television and the radio has obscured certain inescapable facts and has done little to illuminate a very complex issue.

Britons are proud of their health service. They derive deep moral satisfaction from the knowledge that anyone can get free health care when they need it. But, of course, the care is not free. It is paid for by the taxed and it is becoming increasingly clear from reports by the Auditor General and others that they are not getting value for money.

Management in the NHS is sorely lacking. There is a staggering lack of information about costs: the Department of Health and Social Security can only produce figures for the year ending April 1981 on cost per night per bed. There is little payroll control: until last year central government had no idea of the total number of people employed.

Monitoring of hours worked, in some areas, is absent in many districts great savings could be achieved by reducing staff, if doctors actually worked the contracted hours.

Stock control is atrocious: in some areas sheets are treated as disposable because so many are stolen. Storage of drugs is often dangerously complacent: hundreds of thousands of pounds of drugs are stored in single refrigerators protected against power failure by generators that can themselves fail. Old people, who are not ill but are unwanted by their families, are often kept in hospitals at a cost that is probably considerably more now than £100 per bed per night.

Far too often consultants leave juniors to do their work while they earn large fees in the private sector. In a sane health service, doctors would be fully employed. Only in the NHS do they have time to moonlight, with the blessing of their employers.

Though better management must be possible, managers are also asked, when they allocate resources, to take life-and-death decisions. They are, in effect, being asked to choose who to let die. It is an utterly unreasonable request.

Unless the Government takes radical steps, the cost of inefficient health care will continue its astronomical climb and the Tories' political fortunes could slump.

Health insurance should be made compulsory. Premiums should be provided by the government for those who cannot pay. Everyone, not just the better off, would be free to choose which company they insured with. The government would lay down certain minimum standards and, initially at least, might have to help with capital expenditure on certain items of equipment.

Those parts of the health service for which customers can be found should be sold, including hospitals. Management buy-outs should be encouraged as the best way to make doctors sensible of cost. Those sectors that remain in government hands should be transformed from social services into commercialised industries operating on a commercial basis selling their services to private insurance companies. Once suitably profitable, they too could be sold off.

There would, of course, be problems. Some existing private health insurance companies, living off the fat crumbs that fall from the NHS table, might suggest that they were unable to provide the full range of services required. If so, others would certainly appear.

Only when the resources that the nation dictates to health care are distributed through a free market will decisions be returned to the consumer, where they belong, and only then will the pound that the individual puts in deliver the maximum care to the patient when it comes out.

The author is a novelist and political adviser. (The Times Newspapers Limited 1983.)

George Walden assesses the EEC foreign affairs success story

We may fall out on fish, but by jingo not in Poco

As the EEC summit confrontation in Athens begins today, it is a good time to remember that the Community coin has two sides. Economic cooperation is under strain. Has political cooperation been faring any better?

In two or three months' time, President Reagan will inform us that a senior American emissary is on his way to Moscow for high-level exchanges on the whole sweep of US-USSR relations. We shall all welcome this in public. But there will be a ripple of concern in Europe about non-consultation, and about the implications of the renewal of superpower diplomacy.

The first instance of British diplomats will be to reach not for their transatlantic tie-line, but for a bilious green telegram form which will put them into immediate confidential contact with the other chancelleries of Europe. If they do use their phones, it will be to test the first reactions of a few principal European partners. Those reactions will probably be very similar to our own.

This Euro-reflex is one of the main achievements of the Community. It is codified in the Poco (Political Cooperation) system which exists to coordinate as far as possible the foreign policy of member countries. This apparatus, mercifully light, grew up only a decade or so ago outside the formal treaties.

At first, the French in particular insisted on maintaining procedural distinctions, as on the famous occasion when foreign ministers held one meeting in the morning, and then the same nine men solemnly flew to Copenhagen for a Poco meeting in the afternoon. Now they are more relaxed; wherever they are, a wand is waved, and they get on with it.

The system is built on three tiers: meetings of experts, for example on the Middle East or the Soviet Union; of political directors (normally the number two in the foreign ministry); and the first time since the breakdown of the intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) talks, will be urged to keep their nerve during the coming months of tension and public protest.

A year ago the Reagan administration only just managed to block a series of moves by Congress which would, among other things, have cut funds for the pre-positioning of equipment for two more divisions in West Germany. As it was it could not prevent Congress imposing a ceiling on the number of peacetime troops in Western Europe — the first time such a ceiling has been fixed in 35 years. The restriction itself is not significant, but it establishes a precedent to which Congressmen could return in coming years. It reflected moreover the "creeping scepticism" over the division of responsibility at NATO.

Pentagon officials gloomily point out that the average income in West Germany is now \$2,000 (about £1,400) a year more than in the United States, yet the proportion of funds that the Federal Republic spends per capita on defence is little more than half the figure in the United States. Meanwhile the same officials have to argue the case for billions of dollars to improve airlift capability so that American troops can help protect West European oil supplies coming out of the Gulf, in the event of a Soviet threat.

The sense of grievance has been sharpened by European criticism of the US intervention in Grenada and by protests in Britain, West Germany and elsewhere over the sowing of cruise and Pershing 2 missiles.

So far the Reagan administration has had reason to be satisfied with the way in which West European governments, like those of Mrs Thatcher, Chancellor Kohl and Signor Craxi of Italy have remained steadfast over the missile issue in the face of opposition on the streets. It is arguable even that the alliance is now stronger than it has been for some years because of the way in which the missile issue has bound the two halves of NATO together.

But it is the protests rather than the official solidarity which gets reported in the American press and it is not without significance that hardly a week goes by without one of the more influential newspapers carrying an article which questions the benefit of NATO membership to the United States, or at least castigates the Europeans for not doing more. Only Britain and Norway among the European members new meet the demand for an annual 3 per cent rise in defence spending.

There is an assumption, although it is by no means shared by everyone, that the Soviets will return to the negotiating table for more INF talks in the spring. By that time not many of the new American missiles will have been based in Europe and the gap between these and the Soviet force of SS20s will be as wide as ever, especially as the Russians will do their best to accelerate deployment West of the Urals. But a renewed offer by the

meet his French or German opposite. He was carefully briefed, and would approach the encounter warily, even though the result had been largely scripted by officials in advance. Now the ministers ricochet from one bilateral or Community meeting to the next, the danger, if any, is one of over-familiarity, of a sort of stream of consciousness diplomacy.

The most informal get-togethers are the occasional weekend Poco meetings, where there is an element of national competition as each country in turn tries to find the most exquisite food and location for the occasion. Ambassadors and officials are rigorously excluded. Once in a while, even foreign ministers like to flaunt their independence, like wives at a hen party.

The consequences of Poco are almost wholly good. The European response to Iran, Afghanistan and Poland may have been scrappy and infuriating to Washington. It would have been incoherent without Poco. But initiatives are possible, too. The Venice Declaration was a more positive and enduring achievement, despite American misgivings.

Poco is especially good for Britain, not only at times of crisis like the Falklands, but because we are especially good at political intelligence. This increases our weight in the Community, not least among smaller countries, and thereby the world. Smaller countries themselves can be helpful to us in return. For example, Belgian experience in Zaire was invaluable in the last crisis there.

It is self-evidently good for Europe too: it harks back to the ultimate origins of the Community, which were political, economics being only the means to greater cohesion and security. And Poco is even good for the Americans. They may have found that hard to believe at the time of the Venice Declaration. But for Washington only one thing would be more irritating than a chorus of moralizing Europeans, and that is a cacophony of 10 separate voices from across the Atlantic.

Poco is often said to be the Community's unsung success. I myself would hum, rather than sing, its praises, for a number of reasons. Euro-thinking should never dilute clear national interest, since Europe itself relies for its strength on the



Mrs Thatcher and Sir Geoffrey Howe leave Heathrow yesterday for the Athens summit. The issue of higher budget contributions could make it one of the most acrimonious so far, but in political cooperation the EEC picture looks very different.

crystallization rather than the amalgamation of those interests. However, despite some cautious recent steps towards discussion of security-related issues, Poco has not overcome its shyness about discussing some of the more brutal realities of a hard world. It can do this only if some way can be found of giving Europe a security (as distinct from a defence) identity. The development of Poco could be stunted if this does not succeed.

But the real *Memento Mori* for Poco is the Community budget. Europe cannot live on soul alone. The body needs nourishment too, but not at the cost of the current agricultural arrangements. The public could become increasingly unimpressed by the intangible benefits of the Community. People are already understandably inclined to take the absence of a war between Western Europeans for granted. There was a nod of recognition when I reminded some of my constituents after Remembrance

Sunday that it was better to fight about UHT milk than about territory. But it was only a nod. Piety alone will not get us our refund or help the public sector borrowing requirement.

Some years ago, after a display of Western diversity at the European security conference in Helsinki, the notoriously intransigent Soviet delegate, Valentina Zorin, told me tentily that Europe would do well to get its house in order. Curiously, even the Russians can sometimes find it frustrating, as well as promising, to be faced with a medley of European voices. I explained — a bit pompously — that the West did not run that sort of establishment. Since then we have got our house in much better order, and providing we sort out the budget, we could do better still. I see no risk of regimentation. The French, the Germans or even the British — will see to that.

The author is Conservative MP for Buckingham.

Robin Cook

Owing to pressure on space...

A recent debate of great interest to MPs was scarcely reported. Acting furiously, under cover of night, the Commons approved in the small hours a scheme to provide office accommodation for 90 members across the road in Whitehall.

Such matters are, by tradition, invariably debated in the dead of night, presumably in terror of public or press getting to hear that MPs are conspiring to escape from the bizarre working conditions imposed upon them by the Gothic folly which they inhabit. It is perplexing why they should be reduced to a state of shuffling embarrassment at being obliged to assert the need of every full-time member to use privacy of his own office with his own telephone, if he is to do the job he was elected to undertake. It is even more puzzling that they continue to accept — and in the case of odd masochist or two, even defend — working conditions for themselves and their staff, which they would protest if they found reproduced in any office in their constituencies.

It took me three months from my first election to prise from the appropriate authorities a desk, a phone, and a filing cabinet, and to bring them together in one place. Admittedly this place was a room I shared with 16 other members, which could be approached only through a similar room occupied by 16 more members, but although a poor thing it was mine. It may have been my pride in establishing this niche that provoked its destruction. Next month the IRA blew up the lot and obliged me to start out again on the hunt for a place to lay my correspondence.

This time, I fetched up in a cubby-hole known engagingly as the Oratory, and which has the floor area of a dining table for eight. In Gothic times it was designed to provide space for a single priest to say mass thrice a day, but today it is impressed into providing office space for four members throughout the day. Upon this occasion I was forced out by the practice of a barrister colleague, since deflected to the SDF, of changing out of his court trousers as I was attempting to dictate to my secretary.

Now I have the option of transferring from my present billet to the Shadow Cabinet corridor. This is an option I have not the remotest intention of taking up, as the entire Shadow Cabinet is accommodated in a single corridor by the simple device of subdividing it into cubicles which are evocatively reminiscent of the compartments in a British Rail

sleeping-car. Cramped into this foxhole along with his research assistant, and possibly his secretary, the Shadow spokesman is expected to wage combat with a whole department of state.

I do, though, share with my front bench colleagues the problem of where to park my new research assistant. In my innocence I asked for a desk to be allocated to him, only to be firmly informed that I already have a desk allocated to my secretary. I have, however, been offered the option of taking the desk from my secretary and transferring it to my research assistant.

These frustrations gain an added piquancy from the large number of rooms in the Palace of Westminster given over to residential use by its senior staff. There are only 250 rooms in the Palace available for use by MPs, yet Jack Straw has counted no fewer than 144 rooms absorbed by official flats. Even the manager of the refreshment department has a three-bedroomed flat kept available for his occasional use.

What makes this surprising pool of bedrooms particularly galling to the officeless MP is his desperate search for anywhere to stretch out at full length when the House sits all night. On my first all-nighter a kindly veteran guided me to the House of Lords writing room, where, since their lordships had sensibly sloped off to bed long before, we were left in undisturbed possession of the most pneumatic leather sofas on which I have ever dozed down.

There was even Cona coffee on permanent standby, from which their lordships helped themselves, putting 3p in a tin but my colleague, being of a republican cast of mind, always helped himself and took 3p out of the tin to accommodate his principles to drinking the peers' coffee. Alas, after a year in this paradise we were rumpled, and instructions were left with the attendant to lock the door.

Progress towards decent facilities is at a mere ambling pace. The proposals approved by the House last week constitute the sixth such scheme to be submitted in the past three decades. Only twice in its history since the Reformation has the Commons built itself a new chamber; on both occasions it had been spurred on only by the dire necessity of the previous one having burnt to the ground. It is to be hoped that this latest project will not need to depend on such a pressure for its implementation.

The author is Labour MP for Livingston and Opposition spokesman on Europe.

Anne Sofer

Echoes of Europe's lost generation

Last Sunday there was a glittering occasion at Covent Garden: royalty in a tiana, black ties, cloaks and long dresses, champagne bottles in ice-buckets clinking their way to the boxes, and the sweeping stairs and huge mirror full of glimpses of the rich and famous.

The stage was set for the concert piano and marked out for the orchestra. At the appropriate moment lights dimmed, heavy velvet curtains parted and on came the musicians — sixty-six, beaming, dressed conventionally as penguins. We clapped, they bowed and we all settled down to as ravishing a two hours of musical bliss as I can remember.

So what's new? you ask. London musical standards are generally high and Covent Garden usually puts on a good show in the operatic style. If you like that sort of thing, what makes this one so special?

Well, this was an all-star bill and the artists gave their services free. The soloists were Isaac Stern, Sir Georg Solti and the Amadeus String Quartet (or three members of it). Sir Claus Moser spoke a few words in the interval. And if you haven't already guessed the connexion, it is that they were all Central European Jewish refugees — in one case the child of refugees. The concert was being held to celebrate, and raise money for, the fiftieth anniversary of the Central British Fund for Jewish Relief.

This organization was established in 1933 to help rescue refugees from Nazi tyranny in Germany and Austria, and by 1939 it had brought out 70,000 adults and 9,000 unaccompanied children. Many in the audience, as well as on the platform, must have been reflecting on the contrast between their prosperity now. It appears that they acted on that reflection: the fund reached its target of £1m for the continuation of its work, mostly in Eastern Europe.

But it was an extraordinary event in another way. It combined Germany's most sublime contribution to European civilization with a reminder of its most barbaric ravages. Who can explain how it is that the victims of the latter prove to be the most brilliant interpreters of the former?

The programme was composed entirely of Mozart, and just as the musicians were only some of a larger group of brilliant Jewish musicians of their generation, so Mozart was only one in a long line of Austro-German composers who dominated the development of music in the Western world for more than two centuries. Even the very opera house and the glamorous trappings of the occasion were an updated version of a tradition that started in the eighteenth-century German principalities.

The talent of that particular generation of musicians is fascinating. Those who were old enough when they came here to retain a clear memory of the inter-war period in the European cities, but

young enough to integrate fully into British society, are now in the 55 to 65 age group. Many of them survived the ludicrous experience of internment in British camps and prisons as "enemy aliens" — the Amadeus Quartet was even born in these unlikely circumstances — to attain positions of the highest distinction.

Typically, those who got out came from cultured "assimilated" families who — understanding a minute before midnight the nightmare that was engulfing them — bent every effort to make sure that at least some of the younger generation survived. I could not help wishing that there could have been some way of retrospectively endowing that older generation with clairvoyance, so that, as they huddled in the cattle trucks headed for the gas chambers, they could have seen the scene 40 years later in Covent Garden and know that their efforts had not been in vain.



Solti: Holocaust survivor

This group has created a stereotype in the literature and films of our period: the Central European Jew from Vienna, Berlin, Budapest or Warsaw who is the quintessence of warmth and urbanity, cosmopolitan pan-European before the EEC was thought of, master of half-a-dozen languages, (but not of an English accent), and possessor of a sweet tooth, gesticulating hands, and ironic eye. Sadly, future generations will not recognize the type from their current experience. The children of the refugees, even if still Jewish, are English, American or Israeli, and have a different style.

Coming away from the concert I had an argument with a friend. It is not just talent, she said; at least part of it is the experience of adversity. If they had not lived through such horror and difficulty, that generation would never have produced such a flowering of genius. She is a Jew and I am not, but I think it is just as possible that the occasion were an updated version of a tradition that started in the eighteenth-century German principalities.

The talent of that particular generation of musicians is fascinating. Those who were old enough when they came here to retain a clear memory of the inter-war period in the European cities, but

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P.O. Box 7, 200 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8EZ. Telephone: 01-837 1234

GOING IT ALONE

At its conference last year the CND decided not to advocate Britain's departure from Nato and to concentrate instead on the more limited objective of campaigning against the introduction of Cruise missiles. The logic of one-sided disarmament in Britain clearly pointed to such a departure from Nato since it would have been inconsistent to give up British nuclear weapons but to remain part of an alliance which continued to operate under the overall protection of American nuclear guarantees. In the face of that inconsistency, however, the prevailing argument correctly, pointed out that an overtly anti-Nato platform would win even fewer political friends than one which appeared to be more concerned with the public's emotional misgivings about Cruise.

Now, in the wake of two spectacular defeats since last year's conference, the full logic of the unilateralist position has been allowed its head. At the CND conference yesterday in Sheffield delegates voted decisively in favour of Britain's departure from Nato.

The first of those two defeats which provide the background to this year's conference was that of the Labour Party in the General Election. Its platform on defence had become barely distinguishable from CND, and the CND's protestations of non-partisanship - whatever the range of political affiliations of some of its members - became wholly incredible in the face of a leadership and direction which was clearly a left wing front.

The second defeat was of Soviet diplomacy which for the last 12 months has attempted to harness western anti-nuclear movements to its campaign to stop the introduction of Cruise and Pershing to Europe. The missiles are now arriving, so the Soviet Union has unilaterally discontinued the missile negotiations in order to conceal the bankruptcy of a negotiating position which relied solely on the hope of manipulating domestic opinion in the west and not

on any constructive and discreet discussion with fellow negotiators. There is no point in calling for "dialogue" with another party which prefers either to play to the crowd outside or, when that proves unsuccessful, flounders out of the discussions completely.

So now that the CND has suffered these defeats along with the Labour Party and the desires of Soviet diplomacy it has come out firmly for a British departure from Nato and the "dissolution" of the blocks. In that it is pointing the way to the logic of Labour's own unilateralist defence policy and certainly endorsing one of the cardinal objectives of Soviet foreign policy, which is the disintegration of the Atlantic Alliance. One of its arguments relies on the equation of Nato with the Warsaw Pact. That is mere sophistry, since the former is a loosely knit association of sovereign states which has even, in Spain, acquired a new and important member as living proof of its underlying vitality and relevance. The latter is a single structure of command under Soviet military control.

It would be possible to mount a respectable though not convincing argument for British neutrality outside Nato. Mr Enoch Powell in his present isolationist mood would not doubt do it very well. The emphasis would have to be on armed neutrality even without nuclear weapons. As a policy it is quite successfully applied by Sweden and Finland. It might involve less cost than the Trident system, but it would involve society in more cost in terms of the total commitment by every citizen to the nation's security.

A non-nuclear Britain outside Nato would require the introduction of conscription, massive reserves based on the

continuing military liability of every citizen, and a considerable increase in our conventional defences against missile, air and maritime threats. One has only to see how easily the Soviet submarines have trespassed into Swedish waters - in spite of all Sweden's much vaunted independent defences - to realise how even that position is not secure from the attentions of persistent military bullying which seem to be the hallmark of Soviet behaviour wherever the men in the Kremlin think they can get away with it.

Unfortunately the CND does not have that kind of armed neutrality in mind when it calls for Britain to leave Nato. Some lip service is paid to the need to study alternatives to nuclear defence, but the disciplines involved in a posture of armed neutrality are based on the fundamental premise that peace has to be fought for and always defended. Those premises are totally alien to the unilateralist doctrine.

That doctrine seems to rely on the view that one-sided disarmament will somehow disarm the other side. Would the CND have taken that view in the 1930s, in the face of the rising militarism of Hitler's Germany? If it is thought now to apply to the expansive militarisation of Soviet society and diplomacy, presumably the apologists for CND would argue that it would have applied then.

The basic fallacies in what may loosely be called the "Peace Movement" are shrewdly exposed in this month's *Encounter* by Professor Michael Howard. The two most significant fallacies are first, "that approaches and techniques that may be valid in creating peace within a particular culture can be transferred to an international culturally heterogeneous environment"; and secondly "that a peaceful international community can be constructed by 'peoples' behind the backs of governments". There are many other fallacies, but they would not have been given much of an airing this weekend in Sheffield.

CUSTOS IPSOS CUSTODES

The Council on Tribunals is just 25 years old. The occasion should not be allowed to pass unnoticed. The work of the council deserves wider recognition than it has so far received. It was created by the Tribunals and Inquiries Act, 1958, with the task of supervising the procedures and practices followed by tribunals and inquiries. Its responsibilities have grown as government regulation has burgeoned. There are now within its jurisdiction nearly 60 different kinds of tribunals dealing with well over a quarter of a million cases a year as well as numerous public inquiries. The range and quantity of the work done by tribunals, covering matters as diverse as immigration appeals, unfair dismissal, entitlement to social security, and the discharge of patients detained under the Mental Health Act, is now so vast as to defy any kind of systematic classification. Their decisions can often have a decisive impact on the lives of the individuals concerned.

The Council aim since its formation has been to safeguard the independence of tribunals and inquiries and to ensure as far as possible that citizens whose lives are affected are treated fairly and given every opportunity to state their case. The Council must be consulted on all procedural rules for any tribunal within its jurisdiction. In addition, government departments usually seek its advice before legislation is enacted setting up new tribunals or inquiries. It keeps the constitution and work

of tribunals under review and reports annually to the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Advocate. It has been vigilant over such matters as the right to a hearing, the right to legal representation and rights of appeal, while trying to ensure that hearings are sufficiently informal and straightforward for people to represent themselves if they wish. Much of what is good in the tribunal and inquiry system has been nurtured and protected by the Council. As a result of its efforts there is now a general acceptance of the principle that openness, fairness and impartiality should be the hall mark of this method of reaching decisions.

Over the years, however, the Council's limitations have become apparent. Its members are all part-timers and it runs on a very small budget. It is a purely advisory body without compulsory powers. Unlike the Ombudsman, with his direct link with Parliament, it has little access to publicity if its advice is not accepted by a government department. It does not have the resources to supervise the operation of tribunals and inquiries effectively by checking that proper standards of adjudication are in fact observed.

Members do visit tribunals, but the number of visits is inevitably limited, and doubts have been raised from time to time about their entitlement to attend hearings held in private. The council altogether lacks the means to collect information, on a methodical basis, about the

operation of the tribunal and inquiry system. In 1908 the Council made a special report to the Lord Chancellor recommending a modest enlargement of its powers and the strengthening of its financial and staff resources, but the government did not accept its suggestions.

The Council does in fact have a good claim for further support if it is to be able to develop its role and increase its usefulness in the future. This could be achieved without any radical change in the constitution of the Council or indeed without much additional public expenditure. Until now, the Council's attention has tended to focus on procedure; but there is work to be done on the way in which tribunals actually function. The protean growth of tribunals over the past 25 years has resulted in an uncoordinated and haphazard system of jurisdiction which calls for rationalization and reform. Steps should be taken to reduce the proliferating number of tribunals by re-organizing them into fewer and stronger units, with a uniform structure. Efforts should also be made to define and clarify the kinds of issues which are appropriate to be decided by administrative tribunals rather than by the courts or by government departments. The next 25 years are likely to see many changes in our administrative system. The Council on Tribunals should continue to bring its influence to bear on future developments.

increasing unease felt by many who work closely with young people concerning the impact of violence on the screen.

In welcoming the report and supporting the Graham Bright Bill the Salvation Army recognizes the dangers inherent in exposing a new generation to excessive violence through the distribution of video films. Dr Hill rightly reminds us that "A final question that may be answered for us by history rather than research is, does the adulation of violence among children and teenagers that is revealed in this survey mean that we may be priming a time bomb of violence that could explode upon our city streets in some five to 10 years' time?"

We Salvationists are mounting a major campaign through our network of professional and voluntary youth workers to alert parents to the dangers inherent in indiscriminate viewing. In the long run education will be even more important than legislation.

Yours faithfully,
DENIS HUNTER,
British Commissioner,
Salvation Army National Headquarters,
101 Queen Victoria Street, EC4.
November 23.

Video violence

From Commissioner Denis Hunter
Sir, May I congratulate Dr Clifford Hill and his research team for production of part I of the report on children's viewing patterns in England and Wales. The report (The Times, November 24) is most helpful in giving substance to the

increasing unease felt by many who work closely with young people concerning the impact of violence on the screen.

In welcoming the report and supporting the Graham Bright Bill the Salvation Army recognizes the dangers inherent in exposing a new generation to excessive violence through the distribution of video films. Dr Hill rightly reminds us that "A final question that may be answered for us by history rather than research is, does the adulation of violence among children and teenagers that is revealed in this survey mean that we may be priming a time bomb of violence that could explode upon our city streets in some five to 10 years' time?"

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Yours faithfully,
DENIS HUNTER,
British Commissioner,
Salvation Army National Headquarters,
101 Queen Victoria Street, EC4.
November 23.

Civilized value of jail resources

From Mr Roland E Adams

Sir, Dr Andrew Rutherford ("Building up a prison crisis", November 25) criticises the recently announced prison building programme. His use of the facts seems to me, as a former Governor, to be prejudiced. He acknowledges that no new prisons were built before 1958 but says that there was a substantial increase in prison places between 1945 and 1957. He omits to say that the majority of those places came immediately post-war from the acquisition of country houses and hushed service camps. They now make up a third of the prison estate and house about 10,000 inmates. But they were not purpose-built as prisons; the camps are decaying rapidly and the country houses are too small to be economic.

Secondly, he advances the quaint notion that there was a "standstill" in the prison population between 1970 and 1981 when it grew, he says, from 36,000 to 42,000. At the time it did not feel like a standstill to me.

Thirdly, he suggests that the building programme will stimulate the size of the prison population. He does not seem to have been following the Home Secretary's public statements very closely. The building programme is only one part of the policies to have been announced over the last few months.

I have seen that the Home Secretary has repeatedly stated his aim of finding ways to remove from custody those who do not pose a genuine risk to society. You have reported in your columns that he is extending the parole scheme to less serious offenders and that he is actively seeking for new ways of getting out of prisons the five defaulters, drunks and mentally disordered offenders.

From my own experience, I would see the allocation of additional resources to the prison service as a major landmark in providing a civilised prison system.

Yours faithfully,
R. E. ADAMS,
Moorlands,
Gwent.
November 30.

From Mr Hartley Booth

Sir, Andrew Rutherford wrote (feature, November 25) that more than 60 years ago the Home Secretary, Winston Churchill, successfully embarked on a course reducing the prison population and within a decade this had been reduced by 50 per cent.

Between 1840 and 1930 the crime rate fell by 11 per cent on average each decade. Since about 1930 crime rates have relentlessly risen. It is likely that Churchill's approach to prisons contributed to this lamentable watershed.

Yours sincerely,
HARTLEY BOOTH,
5 King's Bench Walk,
Temple, E.C.4.

A matter of title

From Professor Ronald Fletcher

Sir, The current Newsletter (November) of the Social Science Research Council reports the council's decision to change its title to The Economic and Social Research Council. It is given to show that article 10 of the Royal Charter allows the council to make such amendment provided that its resolution is passed by three quarters of the members present...

The actual objectives as defined in the charter are, however, reaffirmed as being precisely the same: every one (of the five) being enmeshed in terms of "research in the social sciences". And now the decision has been "communicated to the Secretary of State for Education and Science and awaits the approval of the Privy Council."

All this suggests weighty considerations and a painstaking working through required procedures on the part of these august bodies at this very high level of deliberation. As - on the face of it - the existing title is exactly and entirely appropriate to the council's objectives as stipulated and reaffirmed in its own charter, could the Secretary of State, or the chairman of the Council itself, or some representative of the Privy Council, possibly let us know in a succinct letter to your columns what the purpose and significance of this change of title are - and what it is supposed to accomplish?

The puzzle is that we cannot do without the public framework of faith laid down by the churches. We need it as a reference; we need to study the churches' dogma based on

centuries of thought and experience, even if only to reject them. If everyone were an uncommitted individual thinker there would be no framework.

If you admit, as you do, that "God [is] expressed in many forms... and symbolized through many rituals", then the Archbishop cannot be blamed for choosing to follow and to preach one way; and why should not all who follow that way join together to affirm it?

They, in their turn, should respect the individual who are still struggling and perhaps will find other ways to salvation.

Yours faithfully,
M. J. DACOMBE,
Mullion Cottage,
Well Lane, SW14.

need the kind of rigid control proposed. The share of local authority spending in GDP fell from 15 per cent of GDP in 1964 to 11 per cent in 1980; the entire local government "overspend" as defined by the Government is half of 1 per cent of public spending. The GLCs spending between 1978/9 and 1982/3 fell 14 per cent in real terms and of the 73 per cent increase in GLC rates cited by the Government, no less than 48 per cent is directly attributable to reductions in grant aid subsidy by this Government.

Does anyone seriously believe it will cost less to run 13 quangos and other borough joint boards than it does the centralised administration of the GLC, particularly when one realises that only 16 per cent of our expenditure goes on staff costs?

The Government claims the sovereignty of Parliament as justification for abolition. But since when has the sovereignty of Parliament meant the sovereignty of the minister and his civil servants? Nothing can justify diminishing democracy - certainly not a pledge to abolish the GLC written on the back of a metaphorical envelope by the Prime Minister in the run-up to the June election.

Yours faithfully,
KEN LIVINGSTONE, Leader,
Greater London Council,
Members' Lobby,
The County Hall,
London, SE1.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bright prospect for the press

From Sir Richard Storey

Sir, Last week, during the conference in Brighton to which you referred in your editorial on December 1, the Newspaper Society produced a small newspaper, with several editions each day, by using the most modern composing equipment (in a way known as "single-keyboarding") whereby those who produced copy were able to feed that copy straight into the system without it first having to go through a composing stage such as is still the custom in almost every newspaper in this country. The process demonstrated by the Newspaper Society is used throughout most of the world outside the United Kingdom.

The proposed Labour movement newspaper, the way to composing full pages electronically, which system, with facsimile transmission, will make possible simultaneous production of several editions of a newspaper from different centres.

Moreover Mr Heaps, Managing Director of Thomson Regional Newspapers, as reported in *The Times* on November 24, confirms that not only will this method make newspapers cheaper to produce and therefore the publishing of many more of them will be possible, but also it will vastly improve their content by shortening the time between the elapse of events and the report of them in a newspaper.

In this context it is surprising that Lord MacArthur's report to the TUC on the proposed Labour movement newspaper does not appear to suggest the use of single-keyboarding even for this new venture. There is no doubt, however, that the viability of such a newspaper would be greatly improved if it were to use single-keyboarding and one must wonder whether the lack of enthusiasm for this newspaper shown by the printing industry trade unions is because of the fear that such single-keyboarding and other like processes would be necessary and their use in this instance would make much more difficult a continuing trade union rejection of them in the rest of the industry.

American experience has shown that, over the period when single-keyboarding was introduced there, the total number of employees in newspapers increased by far more than the number lost in production work. Transfer of people from production areas to marketing ones

Calke Abbey

From Mrs Edwinna Currie, MP for Derbyshire, South (Conservative)

Sir, The fate of Calke Abbey, which is the constituency, now hangs in the balance. Sadly it appears to have become a football kicked about by both friends and critics of the National Trust, some of whom (with respect) might be bothered to visit this extraordinary place before commenting.

I leave aside the politics of the National Trust and the National Heritage Memorial Fund. I refer only to the failure of both these bodies to agree with the Government some means of handing over Calke to the nation for our perpetual enjoyment; and the results of that failure.

The Abbey - a magnificent but dilapidated old house with a unique collection of Victorian - and its grounds, were offered to the State in lieu of death duties. It is highly unlikely that such a prize will come up again in this way, now that the tax laws have been changed (Mr Charles Harper-Crewe died five days too early).

It is entirely within the Government's power to decide to accept sufficient land (whether in the vicinity of Calke or elsewhere) to create an endowment fund; after all, the Government makes the rules on

Way of the Cross

From Mrs M. J. Dacombe

Sir, You are right in saying (leading article, November 21) that the Archbishop of York in his enthronement sermon (reported, November 19) is emphasizing the importance of public faith at the expense of the individual's private struggle to understand.

The Archbishop also seems to overlook those who try not to be self-indulgent and adopt a "jackdaw kind of religion" but who cannot at the moment, in all humility, accept a coherent framework of faith.

The puzzle is that we cannot do without the public framework of faith laid down by the churches. We need it as a reference; we need to study the churches' dogma based on

centuries of thought and experience, even if only to reject them. If everyone were an uncommitted individual thinker there would be no framework.

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Yours faithfully,
KEN LIVINGSTONE, Leader,
Greater London Council,
Members' Lobby,
The County Hall,
London, SE1.

Extra funds for new research

From the Chairman of the Natural Environment Research Council

Sir, The letter from Professor Francis et al (December 1) requires some clarification and a little correction.

Each year the Natural Environment Research Council funds new research projects at universities, although for several years we have had insufficient resources to fund all good researches proposed. Most projects take three or four years to complete, so the bulk of our university research grant funds in any one year flow to projects started in the previous four years.

Once a project has been funded, it is revalued each year to take account of increased costs of salaries, equipment and travel. Through incorrect forecasting of the consequences of inflation and not, as suggested by Professor Francis et al, through an accounting error, projects were approved in the last two or three years at too high a level. As a result, unless corrective action was taken, no funds would be available for new research projects in 1984.

A lengthy delay in starting new projects would indeed be serious and I am glad to be able to say that my Council has sanctioned an extra injection of funds so that a start can be made at once on a significant proportion of the new projects, including all the more urgent ones.

Despite declining funds it is my Council's policy to maintain the level of university support. In the present situation there has been no reduction whatsoever in the flow of our money to universities which, with this addition, will in real terms be at the highest level for a decade.

I am also able to assure your correspondents that, far from a reduction in the number of post-graduate studentships, the number is being increased.

Yours faithfully,
HERMANN BONDI, Chairman,
Natural Environment Research Council,
Polaris House,
North Star Avenue,
Swindon,
Wiltshire,
December 1.

Law of Sea Treaty

From Mr M. B. F. Ranken

Sir, The important issues raised by the president of the General Council of British Shipping (November 16) concerning the abstention of Her Majesty's Government from signing the Convention on the Law of the Sea a year ago deserve the strongest support. Britain's many maritime industries and activities stand to benefit greatly from the comprehensive codification (for the first time) of the international law of the sea and the safeguards which this reinforces.

Mr Reagan, in announcing that the United States would not sign the Convention, was, as ex-Ambassador Elliot Richardson explained recently in Greenwich, "saying in effect that 16 of the 17 parts of the treaty were in the interests of the US and the world community as a whole, but that the defects of the seabed mining regime were sufficient by themselves to outweigh these other benefits."

No other major country voted against, and Japan and France signed in full acceptance. But several, including the United Kingdom, Federal Germany, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg (all EEC members) and Spain are still abstaining, no doubt influenced by the United States' ill-considered rejection. This must create an insoluble dilemma for the EEC Commission to become a signatory.

As the British Maritime League stated in its Maritime Policy Report earlier this year, any revision of the sections dealing with deep-ocean minerals, as demanded by the United States, is most unlikely to happen. Meanwhile the abstentions of three or four major maritime countries are in danger of frustrating much-needed improvements in the regulation of the sea as a highway and numerous opportunities for British enterprise.

Whilst Britain had observer status in the preliminary commission, it has no vote during this important phase, and failure to sign before December 10, 1984, would lose us the benefits of founder signatories, including the protection of British seafarers in ocean mining.

This is yet another field in which our paramount national interest as a country totally dependent on the sea must take precedence over Anglo-American solidarity, especially as many doubt anyway that US interests really are well served by continued rejection of the present Convention.

Yours faithfully,
M. B. F. RANKEN, Acting Director,
British Maritime League,
Beaufort House,
St Botolph Street, EC3.
November 18.

Classic cliché

From Mrs Ruth Rendell

Sir, Basil Boothroyd has forgotten when he says (Christmas Books, November 30) he has not a word from Carlyle. We all have two. The description of Robespierre as "sea-green incorruptible" must rank as one of the great favourite cliché quotes - whether its users have read *The French Revolution* or not.

And this one is really there. It pops up long after we have decided memory has messed us about yet again and is to be found in the exclamatory last line of chapter 4, book 4, part II.

Yours faithfully,
RUTH RENDALL,
Nussteads,
Polstead,
Colchester,
Essex,
November 30.

Schools' dilemma

From the Headmistress of South Hamstead High School

Sir, I find myself in close agreement with much of what Phillip Whitehead writes (feature, November 23) about the dilemma of comprehensive schools. His distaste for those who, while wishing in principle to abolish independent schools send their own children to them, is justified, and so is his condemnation of access to the best schools by the cheque book or covenant.

It is a mistake, however, to cast the Solihull parents as defenders of the comprehensive ideal, for they too are using their cheque books to buy a better education, paying, if press reports are accurate, several thousand pounds above the general market value in the area in order to live within the catchment area of a favoured comprehensive school.

And why not? In a democratic society it is possible for parents to do their legal best for their children, even if it conflicts with the view of the party in power, but in those market-place competition it is those without money who suffer. The comprehensive (in the quote Phillip Whitehead) the "plush suburb" becomes an exclusive, self-perpetuating elite based on wealth.

It is true that the number seeking to get their children into selective independent schools has greatly increased and is still growing, but this is not the result of any attack on comprehensive education. What created the boom for independent schools was the attack on state-funded selective education. Selection by ability has very largely been replaced, in the maintained as in the independent sector, by more exclusive selection - money. This is not what the pioneers of comprehensive education had in mind.

Can we not now look afresh at academic selection and see it as the most, indeed the only, defensible form of educational division?

Yours faithfully,
AVERIL BURGESS, Headmistress,
South Hamstead High School,
3 Maresfield Gardens, NW3.
November 28.

increasing unease felt by many who work closely with young people concerning the impact of violence on the screen.

In welcoming the report and supporting the Graham Bright Bill the Salvation Army recognizes the dangers inherent in exposing a new generation to excessive violence through the distribution of video films. Dr Hill rightly reminds us that "A final question that may be answered for us by history rather than research is, does the adulation of violence among children and teenagers that is revealed in this survey mean that we may be priming a time bomb of violence that could explode upon our city streets in some five to 10 years' time?"

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Yours faithfully,
DENIS HUNTER,
British Commissioner,
Salvation Army National Headquarters,
101 Queen Victoria Street, EC4.
November 23.

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Yours faithfully,
KEN LIVINGSTONE, Leader,
Greater London Council,
Members' Lobby,
The County Hall,
London, SE1.

THE TIMES
FINANCE AND INDUSTRY
Executive Editor Kenneth Fleet

Insurance companies - eagles or sitting ducks?

Whether Allianz or BAT takes Eagle Star, the takeover itself, and the thought that others might follow, will have lasting repercussions on the British insurance industry. Insurance companies, particularly the composites, will endeavour in future to make clear to the world and his investing wife their real net worth.

Insurance accounts are fiendishly complex and hitherto most companies have felt snugly self-satisfied that this was so. Few stockbrokers - W. Greenwell, Wood, Mackenzie, Laing & Cruickshank, Rowe & Pitman, Tilney are the main exceptions - are capable of explaining them.

Two series of figures are basic to insurance share valuations: the trend of earnings, which takes account both of underwriting performance and income from investing premiums, and the trend of free reserves. Free reserves, when expressed as a ratio to net premium income, turn up as the solvency margin.

In Eagle Star's case, this margin is over 100 per cent; for other composites it is now between 45 per cent and 55 per cent. They are a strength, both in securing solvency and thus protecting policyholders and shareholders, and in providing the resources for companies to prove their skills as equity investors. The growth of free reserves, however, does not show in the profit and loss account.

Allianz Versicherungs is expected to announce this morning whether it will increase its takeover bid for Eagle Star, Britain's sixth largest insurer, after exhaustive meetings with advisers in Munich over the weekend. A bid of about £1 billion - 724p a share - would present the Eagle Star-backed opposition of BAT Industries with a serious problem. BAT has a £914m offer on the table but there is a limit to how much more it would be justified in offering, however ambitious it may be to expand into "financial services".

According to West German sources, there is pressure from the employee members of the Allianz supervisory board for the West German company to take profits on its existing 30 per cent shareholding in Eagle Star. But this would diminish if Allianz has, in fact, as distinct from in rumour, found a partner to share in the huge cost of a winning bid.

There is another snag. If through wise, or lucky, investment policies free reserves

grow rapidly, an insurance company can begin to look undercapitalized and because earnings in relation to net assets are falling the company's performance seems to be deteriorating. The share price is then likely to be lower than it might be, leaving the company vulnerable to a bid.

Sir Denis Mountain was absolutely right, as the subsequent auction has proved, when he insisted that Allianz's 500p a share bid was "derisory". 800p-850p was more like the "right" price.

In addition to net worth, insurance companies need to bring into the light of day the value of their life business (Eagle Star alone had put a published figure on its life business - a nominal £100,000) and also stress the goodwill factor. Unless of course they want to be sitting ducks.

Money targets the next issue

Mr Christopher Johnson, the economics adviser to Lloyds Bank, is the latest to wade bravely into the argument about the financial and market effects of the Government's stepped-up privatization campaign. Writing in the bank's monthly economic bulletin, published today, Mr Johnson says he expects the Government to offer the market £7,500m shares in privatized state industries during the present Parliament, compared with £1,300m in the last one.

This will be possible, he argues, only if the financial institutions reverse their increasing preference for overseas shares, and if overseas buyers also come in to buy the issues. Privatization issues will constitute the equivalent of two thirds of the new equity market next year, although this will still be only 9 per cent of the total financial market. One likely consequence will be an improvement in the yields of equities; another, some upward pressure on the sterling exchange rate.

Mr Johnson's conclusion is that the Government should relax its targets for monetary growth by 1 per cent next financial year to accommodate the effects of privatization, and to keep the targets under review in future years to allow for the probable additional bank borrowing requirements of those industries freed from the Treasury's rigorous fund-raising rules.

The Cable & Wireless inquest

Meanwhile, the inquest into the Cable & Wireless share sale will resume today in Whitehall and the City, where a what went wrong, is a serious issue. Kleinwort Benson, the merchant bank leading the issue, which attracted only a 70 per cent subscription. Support for the shares appeared to collapse at the eleventh hour and this is the second time in little over a year that a heavyweight team of blue chip brokers and merchant bankers has failed to deliver a fully subscribed government share sale. Where is the City establishment's much vaunted muscle power?

Mr Ernest Potter, Cable & Wireless's finance director, will also be called on to account for his eve-of-the-issue, Thursday lunch at the brokers Scrimgeour Kemp-Ges. This was followed, whether or not as a direct consequence is open to debate, by the sudden falling away of both the share price and institutional interest in the offer.

Mr Potter would have justice on his side if he is made the scapegoat for a "flop" that is, in any event, more apparent than

real. Nor is there any reason to cavil with the Treasury's description of the results as "somewhat freshish". It should certainly not in privatization share sales be held to detract from the genuine merits of the tender system.

The City, or parts of it, does not find the tender method entirely to its taste. When combined with the shallow underwriting discount that the Government can usually insist on. Tenders do deter the stags and that element of speculative "froth" which is often needed to make a large and finely judged issue a success is foregone.

The chief concern, both for the Government and the City, ought to be the 25,000 small investors who did apply for C & W shares. It would be a blow if they and the army of sharebuying individuals become disenchanted with privatization. Three of the last four government share issues - Britoil, BP, and now Cable & Wireless - are trading below their issue price.

Electricity prices 'can be pegged'

The Electricity Council is to confirm soon that it can meet new Government-imposed price rises for domestic and industrial consumers.

The Council has been able to absorb the additional financial burden because of improved efficiency. However, a 5 per cent increase in gas prices by British Gas is still likely early in the new year.

● "Names" on the A. J. Stratton personal account syndicate at Lloyd's have been told that they have exceeded their legal premium income limit by 80 per cent. But a director of the syndicate's Managing Agency, Haynes & Clark, said the situation is "neither horrendous nor disastrous".

● New York's Citibank was rated the country's best-managed bank in a survey of more than 2,000 leading US bankers. Twenty-seven per cent named Citibank as the best managed, 20 per cent Morgan Guaranty Trust of New York and 9 per cent Wachovia Bank & Trust in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. By deposits, the three banks are ranked nationally number two, five and 39.

● US shipments of manufacturing goods in October declined for the first time since the 0.8 per cent decrease July and for only the second time this year. The October shipment drop amounted to \$2.06 billion, or 1.2 per cent after a 1.5 per cent rise in September.

● Yugoslavia is preparing a law which seems to encourage foreign capital investment in Yugoslavian industry.

Airlines will break even by 1985, study says

By John Lawless

The world's airlines will have fought their way back to breakeven by 1985, even allowing for interest payments.

That is the latest forecast from the International Air Transport Association - just six weeks after its annual meeting in Delhi heard predictions that the industry's losses in 1985 would be \$250m (£171m) after interest.

The Geneva-based IATA has upgraded its business growth projections, after six years of heavy losses by its industry, because of a much stronger than expected rise in passengers numbers and air cargo this year.

"The latest results show that

the recovery in traffic growth is continuing and accelerating," said a spokesman for IATA, which, to balance the perennial optimism for airlines, is notoriously conservative.

Over the first eight months of this year, revenue-tonne-kilometres (the measure of passenger, freight and air mail carried) increased by 3.4 per cent.

"It is now considered very unlikely that traffic growth in 1984 will be less than 5 per cent. In 1985, a 4 per cent expansion is expected, when we were originally forecasting that a profit of \$1.7 billion would be a loss of \$250m after interest charges.

"The latest results show that

Britain is being reluctantly drawn into this week's meeting of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (Opec). Mr Peter Walker, the energy secretary, will be told today of Middle East anxiety over increased North Sea production when he meets Dr Mansour al-Otaiba, the United Arab Emirates petroleum minister.

A decision on North Sea oil prices will be shelved until after the Opec meeting. Opec ministers start a full half-yearly meeting in Geneva on Wednesday. Refinery stocks are now at a peak and pressure on the Rotterdam spot market and Opec will not officially cut prices. It will engineer an effective price cut by increasing production quotas.

The British National Oil Company (BNOC), which sets the official market price of North Sea crude, is under pressure from the companies operating in the North Sea to cut prices from the official \$30 a barrel. Spot prices are now hovering at about \$28.70.

BNOC is prepared to start negotiations on a price cut as soon as the Opec meeting closes. Opec still feels that present North Sea monthly production averaging 2.4 million barrels a year is 0.3 million barrels higher than the figure in assurances it claims to have been given by Mr Nigel Lawson, the previous energy secretary.

The Department of Energy has been trying to explain to Opec that the 2.4 million barrel figure is a peak and that the figure for the full year will average out at below this. Opec will be reminded that the government is not in a position to control North Sea output.

Mr Walker, in turn, will be reminded by Opec that Britain is a big exporter to many Opec countries and that nothing should be done to jeopardize this relationship. This week's Opec meeting had

already been billed as non-controversial. However, several members have now given notice that they will seek a revision of the quota agreement.

Saudi Arabia has been placing oil on the world markets through its new trading company Norbec, but has recently been having difficulty in achieving the official Opec price.

For that reason alone, Saudi representatives will be bringing their considerable power to bear on their Opec colleagues to maintain the present quota agreement to prevent a price slump.

Iran and Iraq claim that their output should be more closely linked to the needs for their economies. They argue that Saudi Arabia, with a comparatively small population of nine million, is wrong to insist on retaining its position as the world's main oil producer.

However, Saudi Arabia's representatives in Geneva will point out that only by using Saudi output as a swing producer to meet short-term market trends will Opec as a whole maintain price stability.

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Trafalgar confident

Trafalgar House will produce its annual figures on Thursday and analysts expect pre-tax profits to be up from £65.6m last year by at least £10m.

Mr Nigel Brookes, the chairman, has forecast a record year for the company and has promised shareholders an increase in the dividend of not less than 15 per cent.

The forecasts were made in Trafalgar House's offer document for this year. The Monopolies and Mergers Commission is Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation scheduled to complete its investigation of the takeover bid on December 22, although the time limit may be extended.

Mr Jeffrey Sterling, the chairman of P & O, is committed to fighting the bid, which promises to develop into an epic takeover battle if the Government decides against blocking it.

Trafalgar House is benefiting from a strong order book in the construction field and has indicated that it is keen on expanding its oil and gas interests by spending £23m on acquiring a small interest in BP's Forties field in the North Sea.

STOCK EXCHANGES

FT Index 741.3 up 0.2
FT 100 Index 83.18 down 0.17
FT All Share 459.98 up 1.5
Bargains 19.915
Downturn USM Leaders
Index 58.91 up 0.29
New York: Dow Jones
Average 1255.24 down 8.85
Tokyo: Nikkei Dow Jones
Index 9,379.85 up 43.25
Hong Kong: Hang Seng
Index 855.74 up 6.96
Amsterdam 156.1 up 0.5
Sydney: AO Index 737.0 down 6.4
Frankfurt: Commerzbank
Index 1031.3 up 4.7

CURRENCIES

London Close
Sterling down 0.0010
Index 82.9 unchanged
DM 3.9515 up .0030
FF 12.01 up 1.0350
Yen 339.8 up 0.55
Dollar DM 2.7190 up 0.0080

GOLD

NEW YORK CLOSE
Sterling \$1.4590
Dollar DM 2.7190
New York (close) \$398
London fixed (per ounce):
\$398.38 (\$273.51)

BOARD MEETINGS

TODAY - Interim: Atkins Bros., Birmingham Mint, Bremner Brown, Ceston Industries, Control Securities, Ertine House, Ferrand, PKI Elec, Hiskins Pentacost, Klen-E-2a, Lynton, Merrydown, Winsor, Alfred Pready, R.W. Titchell, Vinters, Wagon Industrial, Finale: Charles Baynes, Matthew Brown, Dublin.
TOMORROW - Interim: Butterfield-Harvey, Charles Capel and Leonard, Goslin, Farwick, Gavoor, Rowlinson Securities, United Leasing, Finale: Archimedes Investment, Baggedge Brick, City Site Estates, Greenall Whitney, Leeds Group, RHM, Trafalgar House, Fred Cooper, Metames.
WEDNESDAY - Interim: Assoc Brit Engineering, Brathwaite, Crystalline, Dentend, D. Dixon, Equity Consort Investment, Grayco City Offices, Hall (Matthew), Hampton (John), J. James, H. Pegler, Phoenix Assurance, Philips Lamps, Pilkington, Property and Reversionary Investments, Zambia Mines, Finale: Avon Rubber, Denshield (JA), Hanson, Harding, Properties, Keystone Investments, Wolverhampton and Dudley.
THURSDAY - Interim: British and American Film, British Building and Engine Appliances, British Products, N Brown Investments, Crosby Woodfield, Lannons, London and Midland Industries, Mitchell Somers, Vectis Stone (2nd gr), Wetman, Finale: Bass, BOC (John), Bratham Miller, Longton Industries, Marling Industries, Trefus, Woodhead (Jonas) & Sons, Finale: Carr's Milling, Lake Elliott, Reliant Motor.

Stamp duty 'should be simplified'

By Peter Wilson-Smith

The amount raised from stamp duty on residential property has quadrupled in real terms over the past decade. But the tax is a bad one and should be greatly simplified, according to an article in the latest issue of *Fiscal Studies*, the journal of the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

The author, Mr John Hills, says stamp duty is peculiarly distorting because it is unrelated to the value added, profits, incomes or gains involved in the transaction. "It discourages movement and hence leads to inefficient use of the housing stock and contributes to the barriers to labour mobility", he says.

Mr Hills recommends simplifying the system by replacing the £25,000 exemption from stamp duty with an allowance of £25,000. Duty would then be levied at the full rate of 2 per cent on the excess over the allowance.

The Government he says, could reduce the net cost of the charge to £140, by applying the full rate of 2 per cent to all non-residential property without giving a £25,000 allowance and not indexing the threshold for inflation for one year.

This in turn could be offset by removing higher rate mortgage interest tax relief, Mr Hills says.

About half the £975m forecast to be raised from stamp duty in 1983-84 arises from property transactions. Most of the rest comes from transfers of stock and shares.

The tax take from stamp duty on property has risen sharply because of fiscal drag and the system of relief.

At present property sales worth less than £25,000 are exempt. Thereafter, duty is payable at 0.5 per cent on the whole amount and rises to 1 per cent at £30,000, 1.5 per cent at £35,000 and a top rate of 2 per cent at £40,000.

The impact of the present system and inflation is illustrated by the fact that a sale worth £40,000 to £45,000, at which prices would have been exempt from stamp duty in 1974-75.

Government sets £10m target for NCB asset privatization

By Jonathan Davis, Financial Correspondent

The National Coal Board has been given a target by the Government of raising at least £10m a year from the disposal of its wide range of ancillary businesses.

Ministers at the Department of Energy are also hoping to attract private sector capital into the coal board's £50m-a-year research and development programme.

These two modest steps are, however, as far as the Government is prepared to go at this stage in extending its accelerating programme of privatization to the industry.

Any more radical moves - such as selling individual pits or attracting private finance for new mine developments - are regarded as needlessly provocative to the union's, by both Mr Peter Walker, the Energy Secretary and Mr Ian MacGregor, the coal board chairman.

Mr MacGregor is working on a new corporate plan for the coal board which is centred on bringing the industry - now losing £500m a year before grants - to financial viability by 1988.

Apart from the sale of ancillary businesses, privatization is noticeably absent from the plan's list of targets, as it is also from the set of personal objectives agreed with Mr MacGregor as chairman.

Despite an apparent hint last month in a Treasury minister's speech that coal would be added to the Government's burgeoning portfolio of privatization candidates, this strategy has also been accepted by the Cabinet as a whole.

ICL to answer secret report on problems

By Our Financial Staff

Management at ICL, Britain's biggest computer manufacturer, is expected to answer today reports that its profit recovery is being threatened by problems in a number of its key business areas.

The company said yesterday that it had been unable to identify allegedly secret documents which, according to a weekend newspaper report, had been prepared for senior management and which outlined the problems.

These were said to have raised doubts about sales of ICL's personal computer, its link-up with Mite, the Canadian telecommunications company, and the success of its strategy of diversifying away from mainframe computers into smaller computers and office systems.

The reports come only a few days after ICL produced its latest figures, showing an increase in both turnover and profits.

The company's profits nearly doubled in the last financial year from £23.7m to £45.6m.

In the Netherlands, prices have dropped by 4.6 per cent and in the US, where prices rose by more than 10 per cent after government deregulation of the gas industry, some industrial customers are now being offered 33 per cent discount.

In Canada, prices rose by 1 per cent compared with a 6 per cent rise in the retail price index.

Producers of gas for industry are being forced to moderate or abandon price increases because of the present world glut of oil, according to National Utility Services, the British company which monitors prices paid by industry in the Western world.

NUS reports that in Germany, the Netherlands and some parts of the US industrial gas prices have fallen as industrial users have switched to cheap oil.

In return for this, and the painful adjustments being carried out by developing countries, banks should allow debt repayments to fluctuate. Mr de Groote, envisages a minimum repayment level with repayments rising as countries earn more from exporting and vice versa.

Mr de Groote also says, contrary to widely held views, developing countries have both greatly reduced deficits and, in general, been able to device their debts.

In a paper to the Department of Trade and Industry, the British Iron and Steel Consumers' Council calls for measures to take advantage of the improvement in the steel-using industries' efficiency in recent years and to promote industrial recovery and investment.

Mr Robert McIntyre, an attorney for a powerful organization called Citizens for Tax Justice, which opposes limitations on states' right to tax, said "What's at stake here are billions of dollars a year in state tax revenues, reduced public services and a greater tax burden on smaller domestic companies."

Pasta battle starts over state aid

From John Earle

A plan to rescue with public money three ailing macaroni makers in the south of Italy, M Padula and Manfredi of Matera and Leone of Cosentino, is being opposed by private pasta companies.

The idea comes from Gepi, the state corporation for salvaging companies, which would inject about £1.8 billion (£7.5m) of public funds.

Signor Giuseppe Bigazzi, chairman of Gepi said: "In the first 12 months we would only have a turnover of about £35 billion (£14.5m) and after three years we hope to reach £160 billion (£66m).

Signor Bigazzi would bring in as partners in the rescue venture Signor Franco Ambrosio, an importer of hard wheat from which pasta is made, and Signor Callisto Tanzi, owner of Parmalat, the dairy group.

However, this encroachment with public money is being resisted by pasta manufacturers Signor Pietro Barilla, of Parma, and Signor Barilla, of Parma.

Pasta makers, according to their trade association, are operating at only two thirds capacity and consumption is falling 0.5 per cent a year.

An association spokesman said: "There is no space for newcomers, and Gepi should not intervene. This is public money, why should it be thrown to the wind?"

The likely result he said, would be that, if these three companies were made, the nucleus of a new public group, 159 of the weaker private makers would fail.

Signor Barilla and his associates were prepared to intervene to save the three southern companies, without the need for taxpayers' money.

Britain sends note on eve of US inquiry

Unitary tax 'invites retaliation'

From Bailey Morris, Washington

President Reagan's Commission on Unitary Taxation meets tomorrow to take the first in a series of decisions on ways to resolve the complicated tax problem angering foreign governments and multinational corporations.

The commission, established largely in response to pressure from the British Government among others, will review a presidential staff level report and outline steps the United States can take to defuse the increasingly hostile dispute.

On the eve of the meeting, Britain again formally outlined its objections to the tax in a note sent to the United States Treasury group chaired by Mr Donald Regan, the Treasury

Secretary. The note followed a personal protest by the Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, in a meeting with President Reagan. Citing the possibility of an international tax war, the British note said that the method by which individual states tax corporate profits on a world-wide basis is contrary to international principles and damaging to trade relations. Left unchanged, it invited retaliation, the note said.

"Unitary taxation is already damaging commercial and economic relations between the US and Britain and other countries. If allowed to persist, it will distort investment patterns and inhibit trade throughout the world," it read.



Donald Regan, under fire from abroad

which has been loathe to tackle the issue of states' tax rights before next year's presidential elections.

The complexity of the issue and the political hazards it raised could be seen clearly at a hearing at the Treasury last week attended by scores

INVESTORS' NOTEBOOK • USM REVIEW

Market seen as success despite high-rating fears

The USM has been a considerable success and has a secure future, according to a report from Spicer & Pegler, the chartered accountants. The survey of 76 companies, already members of the USM, concludes that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. But the high-rating applied to many companies is a cause for concern. Problems in a bear market is feared.

Memcom to seek listing again

If at first you do not, try, try again - seems to be the motto at Memcom International after the Stock Exchange's refusal to allow the shares a quoted on the Unlisted Securities Market this year.

group's financial base. Now they are trading at about the 100p level valuing the entire company at £4.8m.

Unlisted Securities

Capitalisation	Company	Price	Chgs	Gross Div	Yield
£1,000,000	A & G Security	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3
£1,000,000	Admiral	120	0.5	2.8	2.3

WEARWELL
P.L.C.

Preliminary Results
for the financial period from 4th September 1982 to 3rd September 1983.

	52 weeks to 3rd Sept. 1983	53 weeks to 3rd Sept. 1982
Turnover	£26,780,000	£20,334,000
Group Profit before Taxation	£5,308,000	£4,186,000
Taxation	£2,302,000	£1,976,000
Group Profit attributable to Shareholders	£3,006,000	£2,210,000
Dividend	£982,000	£894,000
Retained Profits	£2,024,000	£1,316,000
Earnings per Share after taxation	9.2p	7.5p

Extract from the Chairman's Statement: "The Company has achieved another good year with pre-tax profits rising by 26.7% over those recorded last year. The Board is recommending a final dividend of 1.5p net per share payable on 27th February 1984 to shareholders on the register at 30th January 1984 which, together with the interim dividend of 1.32p net per share already paid, makes a total of 3.82p net per share for the year."

Notes: (1) The earnings per share for the 53 weeks ended 3rd September 1982 has been calculated on the basis of the weighted average number of shares in issue during that period.

(2) In accordance with the Company's accounting policies, the anticipated goodwill arising on the Group's acquisition of its 50.12% holding in Inter-City Investments Group p.l.c. is being provided in the amount of £400,000 as a write-off to reserves.

81-91 COMMERCIAL ROAD, LONDON E11 1RD. TELEPHONE 01-377 9000.

VG INSTRUMENTS PLC
(Registered in England under the Companies Acts 1948 to 1981 No 1772847)

Offer for Sale by Tender
by
N.M. Rothschild & Sons Limited
of
12,500,000 ordinary shares of 10p each at a minimum price of 130p per share, the price tendered being payable in full on application.

SHARE CAPITAL
Issued and to be issued fully paid

Authorised	£6,000,000	in ordinary shares of 10p each	£6,000,000
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The principal activity of VG Instruments plc and its subsidiaries is the manufacture and supply of a range of sophisticated scientific instruments for the analysis of liquids, solids and gases, using mass spectrometry, electron spectroscopy and allied techniques.

The application for the ordinary shares now being offered for sale will open at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 8th December, 1983 and may be closed at any time thereafter.

Copies of the Offer for Sale (on the terms of which alone applications will be considered) with application forms, are available from:-

In London: N.M. Rothschild & Sons Limited, New Court, St. Swinburn Lane, London EC4.

Painture Gordon & Co., 9 Moorfields Highwalk, London EC2.

National Westminster Bank PLC, New Issues Department, 2 Princes Street, London EC2.

Outside London: N.M. Rothschild & Sons Limited, 3 York Street, Manchester 2.

National Westminster Bank PLC at the following addresses:

23 Stamford New Road, Atrincham	18 London Road, East Grinstead
Colmore Centre, 103 Colmore Row, Birmingham	80 George Street, Edinburgh
38 Corn Street, Bristol	14 Blythswood Square, Glasgow
117 St. Mary Street, Cardiff	8 Park Row, Leeds
55 King Street, Manchester	

This Offer for Sale is being advertised in full with an application form in the Financial Times and The Daily Telegraph on Monday, 5th December, 1983.

Aid 'to be linked with jobs'

Future forms of regional aid from central government will be more closely related to unemployment, says the Chancellor, Mr Nigel Lawson.

Details of a White Paper on regional aid, expected before Christmas, have not been completed, he said. But he felt Britain was not getting enough value from the present system. Money spent had to be more related to jobs.

He gave as an example of regional spending the big development at Sullom Voe, in the Shetlands, which was a "massive capital programme which hardly created any jobs."

Offshore and International Funds

Fund	Current Price	1 Year	3 Year	5 Year
ABN Bank	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Barclays	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
BCCI	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Combank Savings	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Consolidated Crd	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Continental Trust	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
C. Hoare & Co	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Lloyds Bank	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Midland Bank	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Nat Westminster	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
TSE	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24
Williams & Glyn's	10.27	11.15	12.25	13.24

APPOINTMENTS

Post Office: Mr John Kibble, chairman of North Western Postal Board, is to move to Post Office headquarters in London to be director of organization development. He is succeeded by Mr Colin Childes, at present controller of mail operations in the London Postal Region.

Mr Ian Barrie, at present director of the Post Office Estates Executive, will become chairman of the Scottish Postal Board in succession to Mr G. H. G. Tilling, who is retiring.

Mr Michael Hughes has been appointed chairman after Mr Ian McCall's retirement.

Deceased C. Fraser, Accountant: Messrs P. M. Greenwood, M. R. Harris, S. F. Lee, Adrian Mathias, William Rayner and B. K. Rigby, will become partners in the firm. Mr R. P. Willis, who is retiring as managing director of Irish Life Assurance, is to become a partner in the Dublin office.

Base Lending Rates

ABN Bank	9%
Barclays	9%
BCCI	9%
Combank Savings	11.04%
Consolidated Crd	9%
Continental Trust	9%
C. Hoare & Co	9%
Lloyds Bank	9%
Midland Bank	9%
Nat Westminster	9%
TSE	9%
Williams & Glyn's	9%

group's financial base. Now they are trading at about the 100p level valuing the entire company at £4.8m.

The Stock Exchange blocked Memcom's application because of the group's bad record which revealed profits of only £60,000, against total losses of £230,000 over the past six years. It made the group's profits forecast look unrealistic.

However, Memcom has signed a £3.6m contract for a large-scale electronic filing system for the Nigerian Research & Construction Bureau. Memcom has received a downpayment of £2.7m for the deal, the bulk of which should be carried into the next financial year, 1984-85.

Afor expects Memcom to exceed its profits forecast and is at present looking for pre-tax profits of about £800,000.

The bulk of Memcom's contract involves Third World countries where the absence of government bureaucracy allows the group's integrated information systems to be installed without much difficulty.

The Nigerian contract adds a further £3.6m to its turnover order book now totalling £9.4m. Memcom hopes to announce a £1.5m contract with Iraq shortly and is at present negotiating its first large British contract.

Meanwhile, Afor is hoping to boost its over-the-counter market with a placing of shares in Atlas Systems, the US-based computer computerized information storage and retrieval specialist. Afor is placing 900,000 shares at 100p valuing the entire group at £3.3m.

The USM's ability to introduce new innovative companies to the USM shows no sign of slowing. This week broker Cooil, Gilbert & Sankey is placing 944,000 shares in High-Point Services Group at 137p a share. High-Point provides a range of professional advisory, financial and management services to the international contracting and offshore oil and gas industries.

The group hopes to raise £200,000 from the placing which will value the entire company at £5.26m. The money will be used to reduce debts of about £200,000 and provide extra working capital.

Mr Ian Reeves, chairman and founder, says the group is the only one of its kind in the country and now operates across three continents. But it led to problems in valuing the company ahead of its stock market.

However, for a company where the pre-tax profits have grown from £112,000 to £581,000, with just a brief hiccup in 1980, the price/earnings ratio of 11.7 based on the

FIXED-INTEREST STOCKS

Stock	Per Cent	Dividend	Yield
ABN Bank	10.27	11.15	12.25
Barclays	10.27	11.15	12.25
BCCI	10.27	11.15	12.25
Combank Savings	10.27	11.15	12.25
Consolidated Crd	10.27	11.15	12.25
Continental Trust	10.27	11.15	12.25
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Nat Westminster	10.27	11.15	12.25
TSE	10.27	11.15	12.25
Williams & Glyn's	10.27	11.15	12.25

British Assets Trust plc

Results for the year ended 30th September 1983

7.7% dividend increase again beats inflation (up 5.19%)

Annual dividend rate now 5p
Net asset value up 51.8% to 199.85p
Total assets reach £197.1m

DIVIDEND RECORD 1974/83

1974	1.225p
1975	1.40p
1976	1.80p
1977	2.00p
1978	2.40p
1979	3.10p
1980	3.80p
1981	4.05p
1982	4.55p
1983	4.90p

Dividends + 300%
Inflation + 205%
Average Investment Trust Dividend + 174%

To: The Secretariat Department, Ivory & Sims plc, One Charlotte Square, Edinburgh EH2 4DZ.

Please send me a copy of the 1983 Annual Report for British Assets Trust plc.

Name _____
Address _____

American notebook

Markets contradict official euphoria

The Administration was sounding euphoric about the economic situation by the end of last week. Unemployment fell sharply again last month to 8.2 per cent from 8.7 per cent in October. The rate had been 9.1 per cent in September.

It was also announced that the index of leading indicators rose 0.8 per cent in October (twice what was expected). This was the fourteenth consecutive monthly rise in this index.

The only cloud on the horizon for the Administration seemed to be the problem of Mr Martin Feldstein, chairman of the council of economic advisers, who persisted in contradicting the official view that tax increases are not a necessary or desirable solution to the huge federal budget deficits.

Viewers of network television last week might have been excused for believing that the American economy is set on a course of irresistible expansion right through next year. This is, of course, the "consensus" view of the nation's economists as they are regularly surveyed.

Yet it is apparent that to participants in the financial market things do not look so rosy.

In the bond markets there is deep gloom. By the end of last week the December Treasury bond contract was back down to 70 1/2%, well below May's level of almost 79 for this contract. For the fourth time since a rally in bond futures was attempted from the mid-August low (when the December contract fell to 67 1/2%) an attempt at a rally in bond futures has failed.

Stocks set a record in the week before last but last week they lost more than points on the Dow Jones Industrial average, most of that loss occurring on Friday.

Commodity futures have been floundering since they reached a peak in early September. At that time, the Commodity Research Bureau index of commodity futures reached 284. By last Friday, this index was back down to 272.5. Spot commodity prices are also well off their recent peak, with the bureau's index down from 276 in the last week of August to about 265.

Behind this gloom is the financial markets' view has been called "Fed tightening mania".

The financial markets are preoccupied with the policies of the Federal Reserve that have produced almost zero money growth for the past five months.

EUROBOND PRICES

Country	Yield	Price
France 10% 1994	11.25	111.25
France 10% 1995	11.25	111.25
France 10% 1996	11.25	111.25
France 10% 1997	11.25	111.25
France 10% 1998	11.25	111.25
France 10% 1999	11.25	111.25
France 10% 2000	11.25	111.25
France 10% 2001	11.25	111.25
France 10% 2002	11.25	111.25
France 10% 2003	11.25	111.25

CONVERTIBLES

Company	Yield	Price
ABN Bank	10.27	11.15
Barclays	10.27	11.15
BCCI	10.27	11.15
Combank Savings	10.27	11.15
Consolidated Crd	10.27	11.15
Continental Trust	10.27	11.15
C. Hoare & Co	10.27	11.15
Lloyds Bank	10.27	11.15
Midland Bank	10.27	11.15
Nat Westminster	10.27	11.15
TSE	10.27	11.15
Williams & Glyn's	10.27	11.15

Money Market
Deposits for Companies and Private Investors

Average Rate Scheme offers

- Competitive interest rate
- Short notice repayment
- Quarterly interest
- Deposits £5,000 to £250,000

United Dominion Trust

Full details from: Treasurer, Department 8th Floor, Princes House, 10-13 Abchurch Lane, London EC4A 3DF. Tel: 01-481 6681. Member of the TSB Group.

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RUGBY UNION

Rosslyn Park apply brake to unbeaten run by Wasps

By David Hands, Rugby Correspondent

Wasps 15-0
Rosslyn Park 0

There are obviously hazards in combining a centre's duties with those of an open-side flanker. Three of England's leading club sides lost their leaders on Saturday. Bath, who were unable to select Spurrell because of a knee injury, Leicester who lost Smith during their game with a dislocated finger but nevertheless beat Gloucester, and Rosslyn Park, who found themselves minus Alchurch after only seven minutes of their game with Wasps at Sudbury because of a suspected hamstring.

Not that Park wandered from their objective of putting a break on Wasps' 15-match unbeaten run. They scored two penalty goals and a dropped goal against three penalties, and if the overall performance was not entirely inspired it was still a heart-warming showing from the Park pack which seldom allows Wasps to develop any kind of momentum, while their backs defended with the tenacity of seven bulldogs.

Stringer had six penalty attempts and succeeded with three of them, one by courtesy of Ripley after a curious episode. Rose leapt high to take a catch from Davies' Garrywen, was injured in the subsequent fall and penalized for not releasing the ball.

While he received detention Stringer leapt up. Mr Frost omitted to wave his touch judges behind the posts. Stringer kicked, no flags went up and the referee ordered a drop out until Ripley pointed out that the goal was good (and levelled the score) and play restarted from the middle.

As well as restoring one's faith in human nature, Ripley's action also made a point regarding the county championship semi-final of the previous weekend between Somerset and Yorkshire, when Horton missed a dropped goal which was subsequently awarded by the referee.

The official, as we know, is the

soul arbiter of fact and Somerset were their match by three points. Yet Ripley's action persuaded the referee to change his mind and Park drew a game they might otherwise have lost.

For that reason alone the heart did its best to will Park to a win while the head suggested that Wasps ought to have won because they should have had the confidence to play a wider game from the quality possession acquired from all phases. But apart from two runs entering runs by Davies early in the game the Wasps were hide bound hoping that Park would make mistakes rather than try to create their own scores.

There were flashes of adventure from Park; Carr, given only one opportunity, nearly made it to the corner flag but otherwise their second half rear-guard action, appropriately generalised by Montgomery, was excellent in every aspect. Rose, who had a very sound game, made the half time score 3-3 with a penalty, gave Park the lead with a second penalty and then dropped a goal to restore that lead. There were only five minutes left when Stringer saved Wasps' blushes with his penalty.

Spurrell, Bath's captain, is still uncertain about the damage to his knee which may require a cartilage operation, but in his absence, his club has been helped by tries from Hill and Martin. At Leicester, there was praise for Tony R. Trigg's handling of the game with Gloucester which the host club won 30-20 materially assisted by six penalties from Hare.

Gloucester showed all their old virtues of power in the pack and speed in the half which earned them a try by League, Taylor and Orwin, and a penalty try. They also showed signs of ill-discipline by conceding so many kickable penalties while Underwood, Leicester's left wing,

was not at their best by their own admission. Morley scored an early try through Jarzyna, Yorkshire scrum half, but they missed two simple penalties in the first half, and another more difficult chance after the interval.

West Hartlepool, the outstanding outsiders in the John Player Cup last season, beat Morley by only a short head in the second round on Saturday. So close was the match that some of the judges were divided and on Sunday one newspaper actually recorded the result as a 4-3 victory for Morley.

The luck was with West, who were not at their best by their own admission. Morley scored an early try through Jarzyna, Yorkshire scrum half, but they missed two simple penalties in the first half, and another more difficult chance after the interval.

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Stringer: on the ball three times out of six

Morley pay penalty for missing kicks

By Nicholas Keith

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RACING: PUNISHING VICTORY FOR OBSERVE AT CHEPSTOW

Francombe left confused after fine for 'trying too hard'

By John Karter

Having been fined £75 for not riding Observe vigorously enough at Newbury in his previous outing, it seemed almost a foregone conclusion that John Francombe should be fined the same amount by the Chepstow stewards for being too hard on the horse during his victory over Silver Buck in Saturday's Rehearsal Chase.

That was certainly most observers' gut reaction to a powerful finish from Francombe that looked, even on closer inspection of the replay, no more excessive than the sort of finishes you see - and which go unpunished - every day of the week.

However, gut reaction is one thing, an objective look at the facts quite another. The stewards are there to be shot at and, as with the spite of rough riding offences and sometimes inconsistent punishments meted out, during the past Flat season, they often are.

In Francombe's case, though, there was a lot more to their decision than met the public eye. Francombe felt that having done everything but hit Observe with his whip at Newbury and still been fined for not riding hard enough to get second place, he was expected to hit the horse on Saturday.

According to the Chepstow stewards, however, what Francombe did wrong on Saturday was to hit the horse too hard. Indeed, Colonel Edward Smeeden, one of the stewards officiating at Chepstow on Saturday, said that they had absolutely no alternative but to punish Francombe and that on the evidence they could have imposed a much heavier fine or even suspended him.

That evidence was drawn to the stewards' attention by the experienced Jockey Club officer in attendance when she inspected Observe in the unsaddling enclosure. Apparently, there were several marks on the horse's quarters and one of the whip strokes had

drawn blood. When the vet returned after 20 minutes to reinspect Observe the weals were still as outstanding as before.

Francombe admits to hitting the horse nine times during the last mile, but seven of those were just slaps and only twice did he really "lay into him."

He was pulling my leg," Francombe said yesterday. "It's like a naughty child - you have to make it hurt to have some effect."

Colonel Smeeden added that the stewards were quite shocked when they saw the condition of Observe, but had taken into account Francombe's excellent record (he has 16 wins riding) and his first offence for misuse of the whip. Fred Winter, Observe's trainer and Francombe's employer, also pointed out that in his, and many other trainers' opinions, Francombe was the most sympathetic National Hunt jockey riding today and that Francombe had had to use the whip to win the race. He also said that Observe was a thin-skinned horse and had recently been clipped, so he marked easily.

However, it is perhaps significant that Winter's initial reaction when questioned about the fine was to say that he felt it was justified under the rules. It is also pertinent to point out that Francombe himself said yesterday that he would not be appealing.

The first running of the Black and White Whisky Handicap Hurdle at Fairhouse on Saturday produced an extraordinary outcome. The stable companions Southern Music and Fane Ranger led the first two places, but the winner lost the race because he weighed in with the wrong weight. Our Irish Correspondent writes: Noel Meade, the trainer, was fined £200 for adding up Southern Music and omitting to include a lead pad weighing 5lb.

Southern Music, who started at 4-1, was slightly better backed than

There are two ways of looking at this case. Obviously, no one - inside or outside racing - wants to see horses hurt unnecessarily, but, on the other hand, as long as jockeys are permitted to carry whips, surely they must be expected to use them. Saturday's punishment seems justified by the facts, but one can understand Francombe's confusion (to hit or not to hit? and how hard is too hard?).

The problem, as so often, is one of interpretation and thus of communication. The Jockey Club must get together with jockeys over this and other controversial matters. Let the stewards show films of incidents they consider unacceptable and listen to the jockeys' view. Government by imposition will not do. Talk, talk and more talk is the only way to harmony.

As regards Saturday's race itself, what it appeared to confirm was that Silver Buck is not the horse he was two seasons ago (even Michael Dickinson was more or less prepared to go along with this assessment yesterday) and that Observe is the very good young chaser he appeared to be last season. Whether he merits a quote as low as 8-1 for the Cheltenham Gold Cup, however, must be open to grave doubt.

Winter himself says that Observe is only his third string, behind Fifty Dollars More and the winner Fane Ranger (5-1) and having scored with authority by four lengths, I have little doubt that the result would have been the same had he carried his allotted weight. It was, however, an excellent effort on the part of Fane Ranger, who was attempting to give away 37lb.

Fane Ranger is likely to take on Boreen Prince in the Racehorse Trainers' Association hurdle at Naas on Wednesday. Southern Music will be reserved for the Sweeps Hurdle at Leopardstown next month.

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Francombe and Observe safely over the last

Brown Chamberlain (in that order) and while he may yet join the other two in the line-up for the King George VI Chase at Kempton Park on Boxing Day in an attempt to "out-Dickinson" Dickinson, Winter does not yet see him as a leading Gold Cup horse.

Never one to be outdone, Dickinson said yesterday that he could be fourth-hand in the big Kempton Chase. "Silv Buck and Wayward Lad a confirmed starters; Brega who is ultra-well, may go Kempton without a previous run, although the Tomr White Chase at Haydock Park next week is a possibility if I ground easily," he said.

John, who has only been cantering recently as the res of a bruised leg, could still, because he is a horse who new little work.

Dickinson also had news of two of his other young horses. Delius is definitely out for season with leg trouble and is put over fences next year. Sabin du Loir, his underling, will reappear in January and kept to long-distance hurdles.

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Fane Ranger is likely to take on Boreen Prince in the Racehorse Trainers' Association hurdle at Naas on Wednesday. Southern Music will be reserved for the Sweeps Hurdle at Leopardstown next month.

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The long hard slog facing Willis

By Srikanth Sen
Reading Correspondent

You could have knocked George Feeney down with a feather when he was the champion of Tony Willis, the Olympic bronze medal winner, in the quarter-final of the 1980 Commonwealth Games in Edinburgh. As Willis dropped from the left-right follow-through, Feeney, so did the jaws of 900 spectators at the Regent Cinema, London, on Saturday afternoon.

Willis's stock fell even further on a resumption after the count of nine when the elegant Harlequin boxer gave the challenger for his British lightweight title more of the same. The Liverpool man went down in his corner but staggered up telling the referee John Doyle that he was all right, but Mr Doyle had already stopped the contest, "as Willis was in no position to defend himself". It was just two minutes into the first round.

The challenger cried out in frustration in his dressing room that Mr Doyle had given him a full 10 seconds to count and he was not sure he would have been all right. Even if the referee had gone through the procedure again it is unlikely that Willis would have survived the next right hand from the champion, for he had not fully recovered, and there was still a minute to go.

Willis can take comfort from the fact that the best of the world's boxers suffered similar indignities. "I was the greatest among them - but he will still have to sit down and think about what went wrong. There could have been boxing enthusiasm in Britain who would have foreseen an ending like that."

It looks as if he had been caught cold. Willis is also having trouble making the weight and the bout coming at 3 o'clock soon after his struggle to squeeze into the limit with half a pound to spare could have left him weaker. He came into the ring with various nervousness and a disaster in what was going



Feeney, a fistful of happiness, gets a big hug from Jack Park, assistant trainer. (Photograph: Ian Stewart)

on. There was none of the loosening that usually follows a boxer's entrance.

To make matters worse he gave away his southpaw advantage against the taller champion by standing square, arms down, chin up and boxing cleverly. He was only just beginning to put punches together when the right landed.

Feeney had boxed even cleverer before the bout. Realizing that he was a slower starter he had warmed up in his dressing room with four solid rounds of shadow boxing. "I was in the fifth round when the fight started," Feeney said.

Willis who had waited 12 months for the contest because of postponement of the first meeting at Aston Villa wanted a quick return. But Feeney's manager, Denny Mancini, made it clear that boxing in hotels before small audiences was not what he liked to do best on his free Saturday afternoons.

He said that Willis would have to go through the usual eliminator all over again to qualify to meet his man. It would not surprise me if



Resch: revenge win

A change of luck for Resch

Schladming, Austria (AP) — Erwin Resch, of Austria, won the first downhill of the World Cup season from his team-colleague, Gary Gensler (West Germany). Three other Austrians also finished in the top 10.

Resch, the world championship bronze medalist here in 1982, started from the number one position and averaged down the 3,430 metre course, which dropped 1,006 metres, in 1min 38.50sec. His average speed was 65.5 miles per hour.

Resch was nearly three seconds faster than he had been in Saturday's training in which he finished tenth. His victory was revenge for his world championship defeat when Weather and Comandini, both of Switzerland, beat him into third place.

Wehrath clocked 1min 38.59sec yesterday to beat the Canadian, Steve Podborski, the 1982 World Cup Downhill champion, by 0.01sec. Urs Reber, of Switzerland, took fourth place ahead of the Austrian veteran, Franz Klammer, the reigning World Cup downhill champion who celebrated his thirtieth birthday on Saturday.

It was also to beat Weather this time because I also think I have won the world championship. I had not had such bad luck. Resch said. On that occasion, he covered nearly half the course with only one stick.

Wehrath's second place must have encouraged him after a disappointing 1982-83 season. "I'm delighted," he said.

The Austrians did the best of all the international teams overall, placing three in the top five and six in the first 15 finishers.

RESULTS: 1. Erwin Resch (Austria) 1:38.50; 2. Gary Gensler (West Germany) 1:41.50; 3. Steve Podborski (Canada) 1:41.60; 4. Urs Reber (Switzerland) 1:41.60; 5. Franz Klammer (Austria) 1:41.60; 6. Franz Klammer (Austria) 1:41.60; 7. Franz Klammer (Austria) 1:41.60; 8. Franz Klammer (Austria) 1:41.60; 9. Franz Klammer (Austria) 1:41.60; 10. Franz Klammer (Austria) 1:41.60.

DOWNHILL: 1. D. Resch (Austria) 2:20.2; 2. H. Weather (Switzerland) 2:20.3; 3. S. Podborski (Canada) 2:20.4; 4. U. Reber (Switzerland) 2:20.5; 5. F. Klammer (Austria) 2:20.6; 6. F. Klammer (Austria) 2:20.7; 7. F. Klammer (Austria) 2:20.8; 8. F. Klammer (Austria) 2:20.9; 9. F. Klammer (Austria) 2:21.0; 10. F. Klammer (Austria) 2:21.1.

TEAM DOWNHILL: 1. Austria (Resch, Gensler, Podborski, Reber) 7:50.0; 2. Switzerland (Weather, Comandini, Klammer, Reber) 7:51.0; 3. Canada (Podborski, Gensler, Resch, Reber) 7:52.0; 4. Switzerland (Weather, Comandini, Klammer, Reber) 7:53.0; 5. Austria (Resch, Gensler, Podborski, Reber) 7:54.0; 6. Switzerland (Weather, Comandini, Klammer, Reber) 7:55.0; 7. Canada (Podborski, Gensler, Resch, Reber) 7:56.0; 8. Switzerland (Weather, Comandini, Klammer, Reber) 7:57.0; 9. Austria (Resch, Gensler, Podborski, Reber) 7:58.0; 10. Switzerland (Weather, Comandini, Klammer, Reber) 7:59.0.

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CRICKET

Greenidge hits out

Cuttack, India (AP) — Gordon Greenidge celebrated his temporary elevation to the captaincy by completing an unbeaten 193 in the first innings of the second day of the three-day match against East Zone yesterday.

In reply East Zone were all out for 98 in their first innings, but fought a rear-guard action to reach 22 without loss by close of play after following on.

Adopting the captain's role as a bowler, Greenidge, who took a well-earned rest, Greenidge punished the East Zone attack.

Not all his team-mates found the going as easy. Haynes, his fellow opener, was out for five West Indian bowlers sent back to the pavilion by Dothi.

Dothi, ended with figures of five for 126 after dispatching all five bowlers and Roberts yesterday.

Harper was the key West Indian bowler, taking three wickets for 23 and having a hand in another dismissal when he caught Ayesh.

Greenidge, batting at five instead of his customary opening position resumed on 142 yesterday off the overcast 342 for seven. He lost his overnight partner (37) after they had extended their eighth wicket stand by 12 to 111.

The West Indian innings finished with a flourish as Holding hit heroically for 25 and put 57 for the ninth wicket with Greenidge.

Holding and Roberts each took an early wicket but East Zone reached the comparative respectability of 64 for three in their first

WEST INDIES: First Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Second Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Third Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Fourth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Fifth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Sixth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Seventh Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Eighth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Ninth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Tenth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Eleventh Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Twelfth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Thirteenth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Fourteenth Innings	Score
Gordon Greenidge	193
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11
Clayton Kew	11

WEST INDIES: Fifteenth Innings	Score

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publicity, accounts, box office routine and handling will be de-
sirable as the person selected will be an all-round person and will
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plex and be responsible for its day-to-day management. Applica-
tions will be welcome from enthusiastic persons willing to
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Fears over Israeli aggression mount

Continued from page 1

not in strict keeping with Israel's security needs and gave warning that a war with Syria (which an increasing number of analysts believe is inevitable in the medium if not the short-term) could involve Israel in dangerous international complications.

In the face of this criticism, which followed Saturday's demonstration of 2,000 Israelis in Tel Aviv supporting conscientious objection in the Lebanon war, the Government took determined steps to deny the existence of any secret pact with the Reagan Administration or anything but the barest logistical coordination over the weekend air strikes, both of which were reported to have hit some Syrian targets.

Although a senior government official issued a categorical denial of all reports of a secret pact, he did not appear to rule out the possibility that an unwritten understanding had been reached in Washington to move more openly against the Syrian presence in Lebanon and against all manifestations of Soviet influence.

The Israeli Foreign Ministry is convinced that Syria has now lost the initiative in Lebanon, and that action should be taken appropriately. "During the Washington talks, both sides expressed their mutual concern about the tremendous strengthening of Syria by the Soviet Union," the official said with what some saw as well practised ambiguity. "We had exchanges of views on the matter."

Pressed to say what conclusion had been reached, he said agreement to use "political means" to bring about a withdrawal of Syrian and other foreign forces from Lebanon had been reached.

It was later confirmed by official sources that a high-ranking Pentagon delegation is due in Israel later this month to discuss the purchase of military equipment for the US Army, one of the immediate results of the Washington meeting. An evermore thorough exchange of secret intelligence information between the Mossad the Israeli secret service, and the CIA is understood to be another.

The improved relationship with the US dominated the weekly Cabinet meeting which also included a classified discussion on Saturday's Israeli air strikes and the possibility of more aerial action in the coming days.

Golden prospects for a Highland holiday



Next spring, hoteliers in the Sutherland town of Helmsdale will be promoting a different outdoor holiday - panning for gold.

However, the gold field is one of Europe's finest salmon rivers, the River Helmsdale, a favourite spot of the Prince of Wales. So, the prospect of an annual gold rush is being greeted with some trepidation by the owners of the river's fishing rights.

About 200 permits are granted every year to pan the main gold-yielding stream, the Baile An Or, or "River of Gold", between April and September.

But anyone planning to join this latter-day "Klondikers" should not expect to strike it rich. Mr Hector MacPherson (above), proprietor of the Bridge Hotel, says:

"It would probably take you a week's steady work to pan enough gold for a ring, say about six grammes. People

have been panning here since the war, but they tend to be real enthusiasts, or geologists."

The latest drive is directed more at the amateur, with hoteliers encouraging prospectors to sleep in warm beds instead of under canvas, and a shopkeeper offering pans, picks and shovels for hire.

All concerned concede that with prospectors requiring to shift at least a ton of earth to pan two ounces of gold, worth £560, the drive will depend on novelty and the beauty of the Strath of Kildonan, rather than a gold fever, to sustain it.

Gold was discovered in the area in 1869. At one stage more than 500 prospectors worked the streams feeding the river and the Duke of Sutherland offered £10 to anyone finding the gold source.

But London businessman and member of the Helmsdale River Board, Mr Edward Reeves, who owns Baile An Or,

will offer no such encouragement.

Mr Reeves admits that not everyone who pans applies for his free permit and the present lax regime is likely to be tightened.

"People tend to do this just as a hobby. As long as it is controlled the panning won't be on a scale that could affect the river."

"However, I would be concerned about litter. And it must also be pointed out that panning is not as easy as some might think. It is hard work and many are disgruntled that they have been oversold the idea."

A River Board spokesman, who represents all the owners, was reluctant to discuss the project. However, he predicted "concern" if prospectors were to start spreading out from existing haunts into major spawning streams. (Photographs: Tom Kidd).

Letter from Warsaw Making a living out of the dead

The boxes arrive in the luggage compartment along with the bulging zip-up valises, the leather and the plastic, the bags too broad or too long to fit underneath an aircraft seat. As soon as the passengers have disembarked and are safely out of view, the men from Bongo edge the boxes out of the hold, shrouded in discreet linen sackings, they are heavier than they look, bulky with the cumulative ballast of tin armour and wooden casing, not forgetting, of course, the body inside.

To English ears, the name Bongo suggests a comic strip character or the echoes of distant jungle drums, but it is in fact an acronym for the Bureau for the Preservation of Foreign Graves, one of the oddest and most successful enterprises in the complex undergrowth of East-West trade. This is not mean distinction, because the commerce that criss-crosses divided Europe often seems to seek out the bizarre.

Squid trawled by Polish fishermen in the waters of the Falklands is bartered for Japanese automobiles. Czech machine-guns disappear in the direction of the Third World and suddenly oranges appear in Bratislava shops. East German political prisoners are bought free in three or four-cornered deals.

Yet even in this business of nudges and winks, the activities of Bongo come as a surprise. Put crudely, this Warsaw-based organization is making a living out of the dead.

Bongo ships between 500 and 600 bodies a year across the East-West divide, and it does so in a way that makes it a model of how economic reform should function in Poland. Its telex machines chatter constantly, its multi-national team cuts through the bureaucratic clutter that normally distinguishes economic life in Eastern Europe, and the limited time available between demise and burial imbues the Bongo office with a sense of urgency that would not be out of place in the Hongkong Stock Exchange.

There are well over 10 million Poles or people of Polish origin living in the West, in America, in Britain, in Australia, in every conceivable nook. Some of them left Poland three or more generations ago, political or economic refugees looking for a more tolerant or prosperous world. Others left in the

emigration waves that followed some of the country's postwar crises - 1956, 1968, 1970, 1980. But though the Poles sometimes live in abysmal circumstances, they still feel strongly attached to their motherland. Increasingly, they stipulate in their wills that their bodies should be returned to Poland. At this point, Bongo springs into action. As soon as the Polish consulate has been informed of the death of a Polish citizen, it informs the Foreign Ministry in Warsaw which passes a copy of the message to Bongo. Depending on the country, the men from Bongo immediately negotiate a deal with local undertakers to arrange freight space on Polish LOT airliner, organize a plot in a Polish cemetery, contact the church.

Everything had to be done with speed, but with discretion of undertakers, tin coffins has to be found, commonly with international firms on transporting the dead - and then inserted in a wooden casing. The body has to be put into the luggage hold at least an hour before the passengers go on board, in order not to upset the faint-hearted.

American sanctions against Poland have forced the representatives of Bongo to transport, by hook or crook, the bodies of Polish Americans across the frontiers to Montreal, where a regular flight to Warsaw still exists. But on the whole, Bongo is one of the few hard-currency earning state enterprises in Poland that does not blame US sanctions for its business. On the contrary, business is booming.

Bongo makes a 20 per cent to 30 per cent profit margin on each body transported across the Iron Curtain, though it waives the charge if the estate is poor. Basic costs are high - Italy, for example, it costs \$1,700 in hard currency simply to pay a local undertaker to wash the body and transport it to the airport.

But as long as it uses Polish airlines, Bongo can pay for its most expensive part of its journey in zlotys.

Bongo representatives say they are not making excessive profits, but even so it is evidently one of the healthier concerns in the near-monopoly export sector of the Polish economy.

Roger Boyd

THE TIMES INFORMATION SERVICE

Today's events

Royal engagements

The Prince of Wales, Patron, The English Chamber Orchestra, accompanied by The Princess of Wales, attends a Concert given by Mr. Marius Rostropovich and the English Chamber Orchestra in the State Apartments, Kensington Palace, 7.30.

The Duke of Gloucester visits The Royal Smithfield Show, Earls Court, London, 11.

New exhibitions

Max Ernst's *Histoire Naturelle*

(until Dec 29) and Reality and Artifice - approaches to Modern Art II (until Dec 30); both at MacLaurin Art Gallery, Rozelle Park, Ayr: Mon to Sat 11 to 5; closed Sun.

Christmas exhibition of paintings, drawings, prints and ceramics, Festival Gallery, Pierrepont Place, Bath, Tues to Sat 11 to 5, closed Sun and Mon (until Dec 23).

Exhibition of alternative technology, Dorset County Museum, High Street West, Dorchester, Mon to Fri 10 to 5, Sat 10 to 1 and 2 to 5, closed Sun (until Jan 28).

Ben Nicholson: the years of experiment 1919-1939; City Museum and Art Gallery, Drake Circus, Plymouth, Mon to Sat 10 to 6, closed Sunday, (until Jan 8).

New London exhibitions

Dazzle: works by 16 of Britain's leading jewellers, Miss Claders, an exhibition from the David Drummond Pantomime Collection; Where the Wild Things Are: material relating to Glyndebourne's musical production; three exhibitions at the National Theatre, Southbank, SE1: Mon to Sat 10 to 11, closed Sun (until Jan 21).

Talks, lectures

Choirs of Angels, by S. M. Brock, Royal Scottish Museum, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, 2.

Music

Gala Charity Christmas Concert, The Free Trade Hall, Manchester, 9.30 to 11.12, 1.30, and 2.15 to 3.45.

Christadelphian Choral society presents Handel's *Messiah*, The Birmingham and Midland Institute, Margaret Street, Birmingham, 6.30.

Concert by the New London Consort, Luton Library Theatre, Luton, 7.45.

Concert by BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra, St David's Hall, Cardiff, 7.30.

Birth: Martin van Buren, eighth president of the United States, 1837-41, Kinderhook, New York, 1782.

Christmas Rossetti, London, 1830, Josef Pilsanek, soldier and statesman, Zulow, Poland, 1867; Walt Disney, Chicago, 1901.

Deaths: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Vienna, 1791; Alexandre Dumas (Dumas Père), Paris, France, 1870; Claude Monet, Giverny, France, 1926; Yehudi Menuhin, poet, Springfield, Illinois, 1931.

National Day

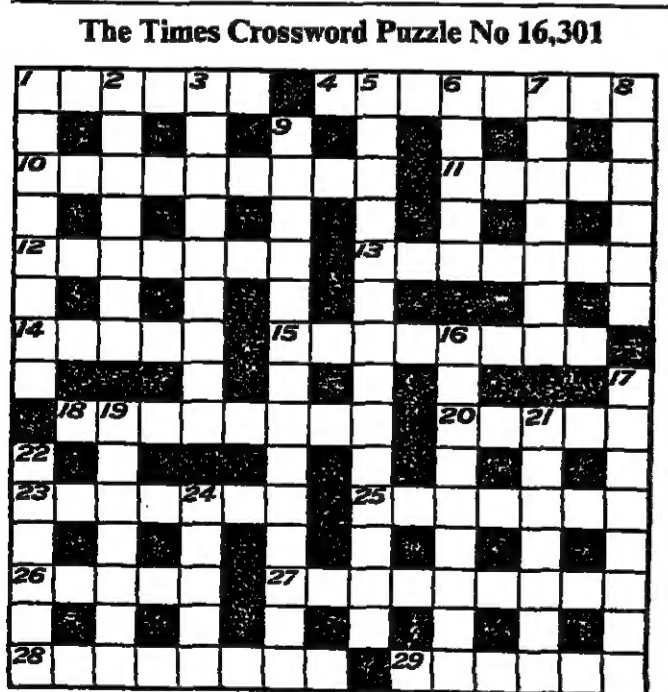
Thailand celebrates its National Day today, the birthday of the country's monarch King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who will be 56. His reign of 37 years - beginning some years after the country had become a constitutional monarchy in 1932 - has witnessed four military coups, three periods of martial law and five attempts to introduce a new constitution. The latest constitution, dating back to 1978, provides for an elected House of Representatives and a Senate chosen by the King on the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

BBC programmes

During the non-publication due to an industrial dispute, the Radio Times, BBC Television will be giving full listings of both BBC-1 and BBC-2 programmes on screen each weekday at the following times from today: 1pm BBC-1, 3.30pm BBC-2, 6.40pm BBC-1. After the BBC news at 9pm each night, BBC-1 will list the next day's programmes for BBC-1 only.

The Solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No. 16,300 will appear next Saturday

CONCISE CROSSWORD PAGE 10



- ACROSS**
- 1 Ruth, with 13, is so arrogant (6).
 - 4 He produces order with piano in score, perhaps (8).
 - 10 To wit, search in packs together (9).
 - 11 4's last letter in catalogue (5).
 - 12 No recall for men manoeuvring in East (7).
 - 13 Street in classy area for one just arrived (7).
 - 14 Left old ship in slow and stately fashion (5).
 - 15 Indulgence shown by doctor in royal assembly (8).
 - 18 Egyptian ruler makes girl take boy (8).
 - 23 Aid for ruler from leader of the second power (1-6).
 - 25 Chekhov's relations in crowd on stage? (7).
 - 26 In one move, try to keep up with him? (5).
 - 27 Keen doctor bound to include tax (9).
 - 28 One glutton amongst many at the dining-table (8).
 - 29 Channel crossing - the Italian's first in London (6).
- DOWN**
- 1 Capital withdrawn from English town's firm? No (8).
 - 2 Businessman who helps to negotiate contracts (7).
 - 3 Mark of grave situation in Arizona (9).
 - 5 No place here for closed minds? (4,10).
 - 6 Antipodean people (5).
 - 7 SAS unit deployed to provide support (7).
 - 8 Turner has to do this, or upset art patron (6).
 - 9 Play for two chaps and speechless actor between (3,3,3).
 - 16 Complaint voiced by Round-heads? (5,4).
 - 17 Blazed - but could be wholly right (5-3).
 - 19 For former PM, it is as hard supporting left? (7).
 - 21 Leader of symphony at Rome, perhaps (7).
 - 22 One's put inside at strange court (6).
 - 24 Surrounded by part of team, on guard (5).

Nature notes

The main autumn migrations are over, and birds have little to do except eat. But with the days so short, they have to look for food almost continuously. A cold night will use all their reserves of fat. Canada geese go foraging in large flocks from lake to lake when they up-end to feed in the water, the white feathers under their tails rise into the air like broad sails. Herons appear at garden ponds: they wade up to their thighs in search of fish, or stalk along the muddy edge and dive headlong when they see their prey. On the coast, wintering greenshank walk in the shallow water and kick the sand at their feet to bring food to the surface. Among the dead leaves, blackbirds clear neat circles of bare earth where they can get at insects and worms.

Weeping willows are the greenest trees left. Brambles still have many purple leaves on them: bracken is brown and broken. But next year's buds are already conspicuous on many trees. On horse-chestnuts the buds are dark and sticky; aspen buds are plump and pink on beeches, the sharp buds show through the clinging orange leaves.

Information supplied by the AA.

Wales and West: M5: Resurfacing work on both carriageways between junctions 26 (Wellington) and 27 (Riverston), 18 (Avenmouth) and 19 (Clifton). M4: Lane closures at junction 32 (Cardiff) and junction 34 (Llantrisant); delays.

North: A1: Section of River Coquet Bridge closed on Felton byland; northbound only one lane open, temporary traffic signals. A1: Resurfacing between Fairburn and Middlefield, West Yorkshire; two-way traffic on one carriageway. A41: Temporary signals at junction with Salterhill, Newport, Shropshire; severe congestion expected.

Scotland: A737: New sewer being laid main road, Elderslie; lane closures. A745: Sunny intervals, showers, windy on hills; wind NW, strong, locally gale, moderating later; sun temp 5 to 6C (41 to 43F).

SW, NW Scotland, Glasgow, central Highlands, Argyll, Northern Ireland: Sunny intervals, scattered showers during out later; wind NW, fresh or strong moderating later, becoming light and variable; max temp 6 to 7C (43 to 45F).

Outlook for tomorrow and Wednesday: mainly dry, with NW, fresh, moderating later and becoming light and variable; max temp 6 to 7C (43 to 45F).

Abertawe, Wrexham, Flint, NE Scotland, Orkney, Shetland: Sunny intervals, showers, windy on hills; wind NW, strong, locally gale, moderating later; sun temp 5 to 6C (41 to 43F).

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Roads

Midlands: A34: Roadworks south of Shipston on Stour at Tidmington, Warwickshire; delays. A45: Roadworks on Coventry to Daventry road at Fosse Crossing, Warwickshire. A429: Roadworks on Wellesbourne to Snow road at Halford, Warwickshire.

Wales and West: M5: Resurfacing work on both carriageways between junctions 26 (Wellington) and 27 (Riverston), 18 (Avenmouth) and 19 (Clifton). M4: Lane closures at junction 32 (Cardiff) and junction 34 (Llantrisant); delays.

North: A1: Section of River Coquet Bridge closed on Felton byland; northbound only one lane open, temporary traffic signals. A1: Resurfacing between Fairburn and Middlefield, West Yorkshire; two-way traffic on one carriageway. A41: Temporary signals at junction with Salterhill, Newport, Shropshire; severe congestion expected.

Scotland: A737: New sewer being laid main road, Elderslie; lane closures. A745: Sunny intervals, showers, windy on hills; wind NW, strong, locally gale, moderating later; sun temp 5 to 6C (41 to 43F).

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